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THE CHILD AND GOD

Rev. M. T. Lamb

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American Baptist Publication Society

"SUFFER LITTLE CHILDREN, AND FORBID THEM NOT, TO COME UNTO ME; FOR OF SUCH IS THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN."—*Matt. 19 : 14.*

The Child and God

BY

Rev. M. T. Lamb

Author of "The Mormons and Their Bible"
"Every Creature"
"Success in Soul Winning"
"Heredity," etc.

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PREFACE

WHILE the following treatise was written primarily in the interests of the homeless and outcast child, the author has kept constantly in view children universally, of whom the majority have no Christian training, while the remainder, though in professedly Christian homes, are too seldom regarded as a sacred trust from God. It is exceedingly sad to contemplate the seeming carelessness of so many Christian parents as to the moral and spiritual surroundings of their children.

It seems to this writer that if the Christian people of our country could once get a clear view of the real situation—that every child within their reach is God's child ; that he is intensely interested in its future ; that to rescue and save it is the grandest mission and the highest and the largest and the most sacred that can be committed to any intelligent being in God's universe—such a conception would revolutionize all our methods of child-training and speedily transform this wicked, ruined world into a very garden of God.

To aid the reader in reaching up to this conception is the intent of this little volume.

THE AUTHOR.

TRENTON, N. J., March 1, 1905.

INTRODUCTION

THE author of these pages has courteously placed his manuscript in my hands for perusal in advance. I have been greatly interested in what he has to say. The subject which he discusses is one of the very greatest importance, both to the individual and to society. It is evident that the writer has the two indispensable qualifications for presenting it. He has enthusiasm and he has experience. Without the former a perfect system, with the truest of conceptions and the wisest of methods, would prove a flat failure ; while without the latter the most devoted efforts, with the noblest of impulses and the highest aims, would go wide of the mark.

It is said that one-half of the world does not know how the other half lives. It might also be added of the upper half that it does not want to. And there is the trouble. Human nature is incarnate selfishness. Every one of us is the center of his own little world and he must look out upon the great world without through the green windows of his own little self. We are too easily content to stay within. It is easy to condemn, or to contemn, or to pity, or to patronize ; but it is not so easy to sympathize with and to help those who are less favored than we. We quickly turn philosophers and set to

accounting for it all. The submerged tenth is a constant factor in the world, we say, and we must beware of nervous prostration in undertaking to correct what we cannot avoid. We have very good authority for believing that we are to have the poor with us always and we are not obliged to do much in the way of making the sacred doctrine untrue. This is the attitude of callous respectability. It is the complacency of the prospered. It is the selfishness of the well-clad, the well-fed, and the safe.

In this way the Good Samaritan is forced to give way to the haughty Pharisee and, by and by, "willing to justify himself," he hatches out a pretentious philosophy of society which is indifferent to the cry of need and coldly unresponsive to the bitter wail which comes up from the poor. It is one of the fine symptoms of the times that there is so much of earnest and organized effort in behalf of the unfavored and the neglected classes in society. I know of no movement which has in it more of the true spirit of humanitarianism, more of the spirit of the Lord Jesus Christ, than this very work for which this little book pleads. It has won its way to recognized merit and to signal success. It has reached its ripest form in the approved effort to find open homes for homeless children. The child was made for the home and the home was made for the child; and each without the other is incomplete, unhappy, and sad. It is a work of priceless worth, in the name of the Seeker and Saviour of the lost, to bring these two hemispheres of home life together.

Experience has brought its lessons to this work, as to many another. The almshouse, the institution, and the boarding-house have all been left behind on the way of progress. It is not enough to take the little waif—a bundle of undeveloped, immortal possibilities—and make of him a pauper, or a machine, or even a boarder. He must be a child if he is ever to be a man. He must be given a home if he is ever to reach his best. And this is the goal of the child-saving work. It is nature's method; it is God's method; of course, then, it is the true method.

The work of bringing the homeless child into the childless home is thrice blessed; it blesses the child who is rescued from a career of idleness and aimlessness and vice; it blesses the home which, without the prattle and the promise of childhood, though it be a grand and gilded palace, is only a house and not a home; and it blesses the unselfish agency which, like some good angel, reunites those whom God hath joined together but whom some ruthless hand has torn asunder.

But the problem of the waif is not more important than that of the pampered and petted child in its comfortable home. The very foundations of our domestic life are threatened by some of the forces that are at work to-day. The home is menaced and the integrity of the family circle, with all its hallowing bonds of life and love, is imperilled. There are many pretentious, pedagogic ideas which are exploited by crabbed old bachelors and spinsters who

know far more about the laboratory than they do about the nursery, and who are more expert in handling an abstract theory than they are in handling a real flesh and blood child. Our good mothers knew more about the real art of training a child than their whole tribe!

The good old ideas and ideals of the Christian family will never be outworn or obsolete. As we go back nearer to them we are making progress of the truest sort. And there are no short cuts to that goal or patent twentieth-century methods of achieving it. It can come only by the recognition of the individuality, the responsibility, and the immortality of the child, the father to the man. The thought of what their little child is and of what it may come to be, is the great incentive and inspiration through all the years of patient instruction and training. Mr. Lamb's book presents this thought with great clearness and emphasis, and its effect can only be good upon Christian parents generally.

I am sure that it is well suited to do much good and I trust that it may come into the hands of many a reader who will be led to lend his aid to this work, which is no more a service to humanity than it is to humanity's Saviour and Lord; for will not he himself say, "Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me"?

HENRY COLLIN MINTON.

TRENTON, N. J., March, 1905.

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THE CHILD AND GOD

I

THE CHILD DEMANDING ATTENTION

THE child is more and more coming to the front, and for two reasons:

1. Because God is coming to the front. His conclusions, his views of things are securing a recognition to-day as never before in the history of the world, and we are gradually climbing up where we can see the child from God's standpoint, and from his standpoint the child is always to the front.

2. Because we are learning better than ever before that the future of the church, of the nation, and of the world depends upon the training we are giving the child of to-day, and very largely upon the first ten years of that child's training. Moreover, the child that furnishes the most perplexing problem is the homeless, dependent child, because five-sevenths of the criminals in our country come from this class of children, and the criminal classes are on the increase, especially very young criminals. Hence earnest students of sociological problems have come to consider the problem of the

child, and especially the dependent and neglected child, as the problem of the hour. While, therefore, this discussion is designed to be general, and to appeal to all Christian parents, we shall make prominent the cause of the dependent and neglected child. God takes a peculiar and tender

interest in this class of children, as we shall see, and the Christian parent who has in any small degree reached God's thought and God's reason for his thought concerning the homeless and dependent child will have found his love and interest and his plans for the future of his own child immensely increased. For these reasons we especially consider it.

God's Interest in the Poor

At the beginning of this discussion we call special attention to a very remarkable statement as to God's interest in the poor and unfortunate:

Blessed is he that considereth the poor; the Lord will deliver him in time of trouble.
The Lord will preserve him, and keep him alive; and he shall be blessed upon the earth; and thou wilt not deliver him unto the will of his enemies.
The Lord will strengthen him upon the bed of languishing; thou wilt make all his bed in his sickness (Ps. 41 : 1–3).

Here are seven large promises to the one who considers the poor: (1) He will be delivered in time of trouble; (2) preserved; (3) kept alive; (4) blessed upon the earth; (5) not delivered to the will of his enemies; (6) strengthened upon the bed of languishing; (7) in sickness his bed made by the Almighty himself.

Equally strong and seemingly extravagant are the statements in Isa. 58 : 6–12 to the person or persons who shall:

(1) "Loose the bands of wickedness"; (2) "undo heavy burdens"; (3) "let the oppressed go free"; (4) "break every yoke"; (5) "deal thy bread to the hungry"; (6) "bring the poor that are cast out to thy house" (note the *kind* of poor people—"cast out," that is, undesirable people, not wanted, in the way. And note again, bring

them "to thy house," not send them to the "alms-house," not provide comfortable quarters in the "orphanage" or the "home for the aged"; a closer fellowship, a deeper interest is suggested—bring them "to *thy house*"); (7) "cover the naked"; (8) "draw out thy soul to the hungry" (not simply feed the hungry as in number five, but let your very soul be brought into touch with the needy one. If my Lord and Master were hungry, and I had the unspeakable privilege of feeding him, how would my whole soul be enlisted, "drawn out," in the blessed service! But now, in feeding this hungry one, perhaps the Master will say, "Ye have done it unto me"); (9) "satisfy the afflicted soul."

To the one who does these things what wonderful promises are made:

Then shall thy light break forth as the morning, and thine health shall spring forth speedily; and thy righteousness shall go before thee; the glory of the Lord shall be thy rearward.

Then shalt thou call, and the Lord shall answer; thou shalt cry and he shall say, 'Here I am.' . .

Then shall thy light rise in obscurity, and thy darkness be as the noonday;

And the Lord shall guide thee continually, and satisfy thy soul in drought, and make fat thy bones; and thou shalt be like a watered garden, and like a spring of water, whose waters fail not.

And they that be of thee shall build the old waste places; thou shalt raise up the foundations of many generations; and thou shalt be called the repairer of the breech, the restorer of paths to dwell in.

Marvelous promises! Let us read them over again! Read them carefully. What a world of meaning is pressed into each separate statement! And all this to the one who cares for the unfortunate poor, for the hungry, the naked, the abandoned ones! How certainly and completely God takes the side of the needy, and counts everything done for such a one as done for himself! How strong, for instance, the expression in Prov. 19: 17: "He that hath pity upon the poor lendeth unto the Lord, and that which he hath given will he pay him again."

The Purpose of this Treatise

It is purposed in this little treatise to attempt briefly to answer a very interesting and practical question: "*Why* is God so deeply interested in the poor?" And because this is a large subject, we will confine the discussion chiefly to one single class of the poor, a poor child. For there is no person on earth so exceedingly poor as a poor child, a little, helpless child that has been "cast out."

Possibly the reader may wonder that we should even attempt to discuss the whys and wherefores of a question about which everybody is agreed. God loves little children; we all believe that. There is no difference of opinion upon this point. But if we should ask each one of our readers personally, "Why in your opinion does God love a little child?" we would probably receive almost as many answers as there are readers. In a general

way we would all say, "God loves all our race, loves the whole world with an infinite love; and he loves because it is just like him to love. It is his nature to love. Love is the great central attribute of his being around which all his other attributes appear to revolve, and to gratify which they all seem to exist." But just why God should select the poor, and make them the objects of his peculiar attention it may not be so easy to discover. For evidently it is not enough to say that God gives special attention to the poor that are "cast out" because they are more in need of such interest and care. This may be true, is undoubtedly true, but there are evidently other reasons, deeper, broader reasons for God's peculiar interest in the needy ones, especially in the little helpless child that is homeless and has been "cast out."

A Child Introduced

Let us introduce to our readers a little child and see what we can discover.

Suppose we bring a dirty little boy that has just been found on the corner of one of our streets. He has evidently met with an accident or some misfortune has come to him, for he is crying bitterly. His clothes are torn almost into shreds and covered with mud, and his face is so disfigured with his crying and with the dust of the street, through which the hot tears have been plowing furrows, that it is difficult at first to tell anything about the child, whose it is, whether high bred or low bred.

It may perchance be my child that has, unknown to me, gotten out upon the street and met with an accident. Or he may belong to a neighbor's family, perhaps one of the best, the most honored, most wealthy families in the city. It may perchance belong to one of the first families in our country, —has been kidnapped and left here this morning in this sad plight. Or it may be, as it more likely would be, the abandoned, neglected child of some worthless outcast of society.

Let us briefly investigate the situation and see what we can see. If this crying, disfigured, dirty, and almost naked child shall prove to be my child, it goes without saying it will be immediately taken into my arms and tenderly, passionately embraced and kissed and soothed, and then hurried home and washed and clothed. "My child in trouble! My child had an accident! There is

nothing on earth I would not sacrifice for my child, as dear to me as my own life."

Or suppose we discover that this unfortunate little child belongs to one of the prominent families of the neighborhood. A carriage will immediately be ordered and the child be carefully and tenderly placed in it and carried to his home. Each one of us is ready and eager under such circumstances to lend a helping hand, glad if we can be foremost in the pleasant service of rescue and restoration.

The President's Boy Kidnapped

Again, if admissible, for the sake of illustration, let us suppose that the president of the United States has a boy who has been kidnapped and brought here this morning and left upon the street corner in the plight already described, crying piteously, covered with mud, and with clothes torn into shreds. No sooner would the boy's identity be discovered than the whole city would be thrown into the wildest excitement. The telegraph wires would immediately flash the news of his recovery to Washington, and in less than an hour, from Maine to California, the whole country would be apprised of his rescue. All the leading daily papers in New York and Philadelphia and adjacent cities would immediately send their best reporters to gather up for an eager public every possible item of information regarding the matter. All who had anything to do with the boy in any way would find themselves suddenly famous. Their names in large

headlines would appear upon the front page of thousands of newspapers. And not only this country but the whole civilized world would be thrilled with the story of the strange kidnapping and the interesting rescue.

A More Probable Solution

But now, to come down to the most probable solution, let us suppose this dirty, crying boy found on the street corner proves to be "only a pauper whom nobody owns." We find out that he is the child of some worthless outcast, perhaps of notorious Jimmie Brown, once a bright, promising, and respectable young man with the best of blood running in his veins. Now by excessive drinking and various debaucheries he has sunk to the lowest depths, has dragged his poor wife down into a premature grave, and at last has abandoned this little boy whom we have found upon the street corner, motherless, homeless, heart-broken.

Under these circumstances what will be said and what disposition will we make of this poor outcast?

In the first place, everybody who sees the little fellow crying so bitterly will *pity* him. Not one of us but would be willing to stop a moment, say a kind word, and perhaps give him a penny or a nickel to cheer him up. Now and then a big-hearted, motherly woman will stop, perhaps take him in her arms, wipe the dust and the tears from his face, and give him a real hearty kiss, while some practically disposed person may suggest that the poor boy needs

a suit of clothing and the nickels and dimes and quarters will be forthcoming and a plain but comfortable new suit secured. But the boy cannot be left upon the street corner. What is the next step? If the child is old enough to be "handy" about the house or barn some enterprising farmer or farmer's wife who has been on the lookout for additional help will bid for him at once. And then the incident will end. By to-morrow it will have been largely forgotten by the most of us. No newspaper notoriety, no stirring of the public heart or conscience, no click of the telegraph, and perhaps not an individual outside of the few who happened to pass that street corner would ever hear of the affair.

But if the boy is not old enough to be of use and must be cared for by the municipality or by private benevolence, before deciding what disposition shall be made of him—whether to bundle him into the first cab that comes along and send him to the almshouse or place him in the nearest orphanage or out to board at the expense of the county—let us draw a little closer to this boy and with a Christian's Bible in our hands and the Christian's hope as an eyeglass to aid us in our search for hidden treasures, combined with a little knowledge of the human soul and its destiny, let us look this little fellow over more carefully.

And at the very threshold of our investigation we will find something that for want of a better name we will call an interesting "tag" attached to this boy, not tied to him with a string but written down

plain and deep, as with the finger of God, and it reads after this fashion :

"When my father and my mother forsake me, then the Lord will take me up," and before we have fully fathomed the meaning of these strange words we find another tag upon which is written, "The Father of the fatherless."

And we begin to open our eyes and say, "What do these words mean ? Is this child related to God ? Has he adopted it or is he wanting to adopt it ? Has he 'taken it up' and is he willing to call himself its father ? Was that abandoned boy created in God's image ?" We thought him the offspring of the degraded Jimmie Brown, but we have discovered suggestions of a higher origin, of heredities that possibly may link him to the throne of the Eternal. Can it be that this dirty, ragged little urchin is, after all, the child of a King ?

Let us continue our search for hidden treasures and see if we cannot obtain further light upon the profound mystery already suspected.

Yes, that little abandoned, homeless outcast will be found written all over with the most astounding prophecies or suggestions. Here is another one : "It is not the will of your Father which is in heaven that one of these little ones shall perish." These words suggest deep interest on the part of God. His heart evidently has taken large stock in the future of that child. But there is also an intimation of anxiety lest after all this little child shall be allowed to perish. And if it goes to the almshouse or is

otherwise neglected it will certainly perish. Five-sevenths of all the criminals in our country have come from homeless children, from just such neglected little boys as this one. The president's boy would go to the bad just as easily and surely as this one if neglected or put in this boy's place. Notwithstanding all his noble inherited traits and qualities, there is nothing can save him from absolute ruin or fit him for the high position his birthright offers him but constant watchcare, persistent training, and the best and the highest environments. And this boy on the street corner is no exception to this rule, though the child of a king and prospective heir to a throne. Only persistent effort, Christian training, and the lifelong environment of the highest type can fit that boy for the high place to which his divine birthright entitles him.

And so we are prepared for another of those strange messages from the throne found stamped upon this little boy :

" Whosoever will receive one of these little ones —this little boy—in my name, receiveth me."

That is to say, Jesus places himself by the side of this little boy and says to each one of his disciples, " If you will take this boy into your home for my sake, or because he is dear to me, I will come with him and abide in your home ; he is my boy, my heart is bound up in the bundle of life with that boy. I go where he goes and will stay where he stays." God's unspeakable gift, the richest prize in God's universe, the " pearl of great price," offers

himself to the person or family who will take this little boy in. The Lord of lords and the King of kings will come into the home that opens to this ragged urchin.

But there is one other message from heaven that is written all over the dust and rags and unfortunate heredities that, to a superficial observer, stamp this boy as "only a pauper whom nobody owns." And this message from above contains a note of warning combined with strange suggestions of wondrous import: "Take heed—be exceedingly careful—that ye despise not, neglect not, this little boy, for I say unto you that in heaven his angels do always behold the face of my Father which is in heaven."

The president's boy, if kidnapped and discovered here on our street corner, would command at once the telegraph wires and the newspaper reporters and the front page all over our land, but this abandoned

son of Jimmie Brown has a cohort of angels, known and recognized as "*his* angels," and these angels have constant access to the throne. And they report up there everything that is done down here for this boy or against him, and the Father of this fatherless boy hears, and hears with absorbing interest, and it is recorded up there, and by and by it will be announced before an assembled universe; "inasmuch as ye did it not unto one of the least of these"—to this poor boy—"ye did it not to me."

God the Father therefore loves this poor boy and is intensely interested in him because he is his boy, his own child, born in his image, and therefore the inheritor of a wonderful future that only sin and Satan and depraving environments can cheat him out of.

II

GOD'S CHILD

LET us give special attention to the last statement made, that because this boy is God's child, therefore a wonderful future is planned for him, provided he can be placed in such surroundings as will lead him to Christ.

In Matthew, the twenty-fifth chapter, Jesus says to those on his right hand, "Come ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world." We call the reader's attention to the word "inherit." To inherit a kingdom means vastly more than to be simply the subject of a kingdom. It

means to inherit the throne, to become the rightful owner and controller of the kingdom. And hence we find in many wonderful passages that reveal the future of the saved, they are represented as kings, not as subjects. "I have appointed unto you a *kingdom*, and ye shall *sit on thrones*," Jesus says.

We have counted not less than seven particulars wherein the redeemed from this world are, apparently, to have the advantage of the highest angels or archangels:

1. They are to be the bride, the recognized wife of the great King:

For the marriage of the Lamb is come, and his wife hath made herself ready (Rev. 19 : 7; see also Isa. 54 : 5; Rev. 19 : 9; 21 : 9).

2. They are counted as brothers and sisters and therefore on a social equality with Jesus:

For both he that sanctifieth and they who are sanctified are all of one; for which cause he is not ashamed to call them brethren (Heb. 2 : 11).

. . . the first-born among many brethren (Rom. 8 : 29; see also Mark 3 : 35; John 15 : 15).

3. They are to have bodies like his glorious body:

Who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body (Phil. 3 : 21; see also 1 Cor. 15 : 47, 49).

4. They will bear his image and appear like him in every particular:

Partakers of the divine nature (2 Peter 1 : 4).

Begotten of God (1 John 5 : 1).

But we know that when he shall appear, we shall be like him (1 John 3 : 2 ; see also Rev. 22 : 4 ; Eph. 1 : 23).

5. They will share with him all his infinite wealth as to material possessions :

He that overcometh shall inherit all things ; and I will be his God and he shall be my son (Rev. 21 : 7).

And if children, then heirs ; heirs of God and joint-heirs with Christ (Rom. 8 : 17 ; see also Gal. 4 : 1, 7 ; 1 Cor. 3 : 21, 22).

6. They will share with him his royal prerogatives, sit with him upon his throne, reign with him, etc. :

To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in his throne (Rev. 3 : 21).

And hath made us kings and priests unto God (Rev. 1 : 6).

And they shall reign forever and ever (Rev. 22 : 5).

7. They will forever enjoy the distinction of priests, men who stand nearest to God and become his representatives to the people—teachers, God's ambassadors, ministers plenipotentiary, in a certain sense revealers of God :

Ye also, as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house, a holy priesthood. . .

But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a peculiar people (1 Peter 2 : 5, 9).

And hath made us kings and priests unto God and his Father (Rev. 1 : 6).

But they shall be priests of God and of Christ (Rev. 20 : 6).

Now, shall I venture to say that not one of all these royal prerogatives is enjoyed by the angels? They do not have material bodies like unto his glorious body. They were not begotten in his image, hence they are not reckoned as children, for "he took not upon him the nature of angels." They do not belong to the private family of the great King; high lords, mighty princes they may be, but not blood relatives, members of the royal family. Neither do they sit with the King upon the throne; they stand around the throne as waiting servants. They do not wear crowns, nor reign as kings, nor perform the office of priests; nor are they counted as the bride of the great King, heaven's queen; neither are they heirs of the material universe; nor counted as sharing with the Lord of lords and King of kings his honor and glory and an equal place with him in the tender love of the Father (John 15 : 9; 17 : 22, 23).

Well, now, if God can see such a future in store for this boy, such a central place, so important to all the universe, on condition that the boy can be

rescued and saved, do you wonder that he is deeply, intensely interested in that boy? And interested not simply because he is his boy and as such may be a member of the royal family forever, but because he loves all the other intelligent beings who might be touched and helped and blessed by this boy while occupying the position of a king and a priest and an own brother to the great King during all the endless ages. For God can measure up and tabulate in his mind and thought all the glorious outcome, the sum of all the gracious influences going out from this boy during the ages to come, if only he can be rescued.

But keeping this thought still in mind, let us come back to earthly things and estimate results that we are more capable of measuring.

This little boy, the son of Jimmie Brown, we will say, is a fairly promising boy. He inherits from both his parents, born before the father had shattered his constitution by excesses, a healthy, robust body and an average brain. If that boy can have *a first-class chance*, can be led to Christ while very young and filled up with Bible truth, then given a good education and the very best of social and Christian influences, he will make his mark, something of a mark, and be rated as among the very best in society.

And have our readers tried to estimate how much that means? It is said that each individual who is vigorous and healthy and lives to middle life or old age stands as the representative of one million souls

within five hundred years. And this is easily figured out. We have only to suppose that each individual life doubles itself every twenty-five years; that is, in twenty-five years the one has become two, in fifty years the two have become four, in seventy-five years the four have increased to eight, and in one hundred years to sixteen. At this rate of increase, in two hundred and fifty years the one has become one thousand, and in two hundred and fifty years more each individual of these one thousand has become a thousand, and a thousand thousands make one million.

WILLIAM BRYAN MCKINLEY

An old man captured for God at the end of life stands alone without a successor. But that little

child captured for God means twenty-five years later a Christian family, and in five hundred years a million human beings, the large majority of whom we may confidently believe saved eternally. So far as the purpose and force of this argument is concerned, it matters not whether a million descendants be reached in five hundred years or in one thousand years; the lesson is the same.

On the other hand, that little child left in the almshouse or in the slums without a home and a Christian training may mean in twenty-five years a family of roughs.

Mr. R. L. Dugdale, in his little book entitled "The Jukes," traces through many generations the descendants of one neglected and vicious girl. The facts are simply terrible. He shows:

> That a very large proportion of the descendants of this woman became licentious, in the course of six generations 52.40 per cent. of the females being harlots and 23.50 per cent. of the children illegitimate; that there were seven and a half times more paupers among the women than among the average women of the State, and nine times more paupers among the male descendants than among the average men of the State. Of seven hundred cases examined, two hundred and eighty became pauperized adults, and this study covered but about one-third of the family. Moreover, of these seven hundred only twenty-two had acquired property and eight of those had lost what they had gained. Seventy-six are known to have been convicted of crimes and punished, while it is scarcely to be doubted that more than double that number were really criminals.[1]

[1] Quoted from a very valuable work on "Heredity and Christian Problems," by Rev. Dr. A. H. Bradford.

Now, over against this terrible history, place another, that of a Christian boy who, about two hundred years ago, came over from the old country and

Ten years later became a deacon in a Baptist church. Seven generations since have counted a great host of Christian families, with at least a dozen ministers of the gospel, scores of deacons and Sunday-school superintendents, with teachers by the hundreds. One of these descendants, a great-grandson, himself a minister of the gospel, became the father of sixteen children, every one of whom who lived to be old enough became an earnest Christian, four of them ministers of the gospel, one a Christian physician; the ten who lived to mature life had large families of their own, averaging eight children each, among whom can be counted ministers, teachers, physicians, lawyers, authors, and Sunday-school workers by the score.

One of these ministers is known to have been directly instrumental in leading at least half a thousand persons to Christ, nine-tenths of whom remained in the church, many of them becoming faithful workers, several of them successful ministers of the gospel.

One million souls in five hundred years. And the character of every individual of that one million, with all the possibilities for good or for evil that lie in the path of each, may be influenced somewhat at least, possibly decided, by the character which we give or fail to give to this poor child we have found on the street corner. Tremendous thought!

Oh, how inconceivable are the interests that are *packed into the chance we now give this boy*. May God give wisdom and understanding and grace.

If we could only climb up where we could see things as God can see them, how terribly in earnest would we become to secure for this ragged, dirty boy a first-class chance. We have found that God can see unspeakably important results to his kingdom by having this boy rescued, because of the important place he shall occupy during the eternal ages as a king and a priest unto God. But now, we have learned that not only this boy, but a great multitude of his natural descendants, possibly a million within five hundred years, and who can tell how many more millions ere time shall end? are also interested directly or indirectly in the chance we now give this boy. When we consider that each one of these million or millions of persons is just as important in the sight of God as this boy, each one of them may be lifted up as high and become as valuable to the universe, if he can be rescued and brought to Christ; and when we consider still further that the eternal destiny of a

great many of these descendants, possibly a large majority of them, is wrapped up to a certain extent in the character and the training that this ragged boy shall receive, how many thousand times is God's interest in this poor boy increased. For God can easily count up the sum total of all the influences either for good or for ill that each separate individual of these million descendants shall exert.

But we are only just beginning to step out a little from the shore into the mighty ocean of influence. For God can see not only the influence that this one life may have upon the character and the eternal destiny of each one of his natural descendants to the end of time, but God can see even more astounding things than these. For this boy, if now given the very best chance, that is, if he is led to Christ in his boyhood, given a good education, filled with Bible truth, and placed under the best possible environment, will exert a saving and uplifting influence not only upon his own children, and through them his children's children, but he may exert a direct and saving influence upon hundreds and possibly thousands of those immediately around him. For every day of his life he is coming in contact with other people, and during forty or fifty years of Christian activities, no one can tell how many he may or might touch for good or inspire to a better life, if he is only taught how to do it. And each one of these persons will become a center of influence, as this boy ; each one of them possibly the head of a great multitude who shall also in their

turn become centers of influence more or less potent upon those around them.

Now, if we are lost in the attempt to master so mighty a problem as this and find out how much God can see in this little ragged boy, if he can induce some one to receive him in his name and do for him all that love and wisdom and money can do to fit him for the largest possible destiny, we may have our conceptions still further enlarged and intensified as to God's interest in this boy by considering the awfully tremendous fact that all these, to us immeasurable sums of influence, are to be decided in the majority of cases *during the next ten years of that boy's life.*

"In all the history of a redeemed soul either in time or in eternity, his childhood period is by far the most important."

Men do not easily assent to this proposition. It is natural to brush the child aside for more important matters. A dozen inquisitive little fellows will very likely be frowned out of the way, while we pay our respects to the Rev. Dr. C——, to millionaire D——, to Hon. Mr. G——, or Judge H——. Even in our home life Susan's little wants and heart troubles must take second place to the great matters of to-day's business. The sitting room must be tidied, and the dinner precisely on time, even though Charlie's lesson be neglected; or, perchance, though he is outside with a mischievous companion, taking another lesson that will soil his character possibly for life, perhaps for eternity.

It is difficult for us to fathom the full meaning of the Master's statement already briefly considered: "In heaven their angels do always behold the face of my Father," indicating that up yonder children have the right of way, are objects of special interest and solicitude; far more so than either Rev. Dr. C——, or millionaire D——, or Hon. Mr. G——, or Judge H——, and for the double reason that this child may yet occupy as wide a place, become as grand a man as either of these noted gentlemen; and for the still more important reason that all its infinite possibilities are now at stake, and are crowded into the few brief years of its childhood. The future of all these honorable gentlemen is already decided; their place in time and in eternity is substantially fixed; the next ten years of their life will make very little change in their position or prospects either here or hereafter. But how different with the little child; the next ten years of its life practically determine everything as to its future; its destiny for time and for eternity, whether it shall be saved or lost, and whether if saved, or if lost, it shall become a man or woman of influence and power to pull down or lift up a multitude of other souls. All this will be largely decided during the next ten years.

For the character is formed in childhood, the impressions made then are the ineffaceable ones. When a boy about fourteen or fifteen years of age, I committed the book of Matthew to memory one summer while employed on the home farm driving

two yoke of oxen on a plow. The feat was accomplished so that I could repeat the book from beginning to end. And that book is mine to-day, substantially so, at least. Though I cannot now repeat it as I could then, yet it is mine as no other portion of the sacred volume is mine. I have attempted since to commit various other portions of the Bible to memory, but I cannot remember them as I remember Matthew. And that book has entered into the formation of my character and life as no other portion of the holy Scriptures has been able to do. But so have the dirty, nasty stories that the hired man used to tell us boys while at work on the farm, in the same way entered into my life and helped to tone my character. I have wished a thousand times that I could banish those miserable stories from my memory and life; but every little while they come up unbidden, as fresh and real almost as the day I heard them. A source of bitterest regret; a dreaded "octopus" that I cannot shake off, whose tentacles are fastened way down on the foundations of my being and character these stories are.

The statement that a boy reared in an almshouse until fourteen years old will almost certainly be a pauper for life[1] is only a confirmation of each one's personal experience. We are all very largely what we were made in childhood. We cannot get away from the memories and the habits and the impressions of our early days.

[1] See page 40.

"The president of a great university said he would give years of his life if he could forget the scenes and thoughts which came to him from his youth."

O Christian parent, be careful what sort of hired man or hired woman, or what class of wild street arabs you allow to come in contact with your boy or girl. Do not cloud an entire life and handicap your child for eternity by allowing its young and tenacious memory to be filled up with thoughts and impressions that can only degrade and defile, and yet can never be effaced.

But why discuss this even for a moment; the thought is familiar to every thoughtful person. "As the twig is bent, the tree is inclined." The clay when soft can be molded as you please; in the hands of the potter it can be fashioned into this or that vessel, as suits the potter's taste; every little indentation or figure is easily made, whether of hideous look or beautiful contour. But once made it remains forever. A day's drying and a few hours' heat in the furnace renders those little finger marks fixed and unchangeable, except by immense and persevering effort.

God evidently understands, as we cannot, this peculiar characteristic of childhood; hence his *intense* interest to capture that child for heaven when its capture is easy; to have the molding of that pliable clay before it becomes kiln-dried and heated in the furnace; to have the direction of the little twig when every little bend and twist shall help to shape the beauty of the tree.

No wonder therefore that God is deeply interested in this ragged boy we have put before us; that he can afford to appoint a cohort of angels to attend him; that Jesus himself comes down by his side and offers the richest prize in God's universe to the one who will receive and care for him.

What, then, shall we venture to do with this boy found to be the child of a King, presumptive heir to the throne, and containing in himself the seed germs of a possible million other kings?

III

WHAT SHALL WE DO WITH HIM?

A BRIEF glance at what we have been doing with him in the past may be suggestive reading, and possibly pave the way for a wiser answer to this question.

In the working out of the great problem what to do with a homeless, outcast child, there have been at least four well-defined stages, each a great advance over its predecessors—the almshouse, the orphanage or children's home, the boarding family, and the *Christian* home.

THE ALMSHOUSE

1. The almshouse was the first attempt to care for this class of children. But its utter inadequacy to meet the needs very soon became apparent for two special reasons:

(1) The child is the father of the man. A pauper child means a pauper man, and probably a generation of paupers. An intelligent man who had spent his life in the care of almshouses told the writer that "A boy reared in an almshouse until fourteen years of age will almost certainly be a pauper for life. Place him out in the best of families and he will drift back to the almshouse. If he remains out

until married, and has a family of children, he will work his way back to the almshouse before he dies, taking his children with him." To rear a child, then,

AS RESCUED FROM A COUNTY POORHOUSE

"For I was an hungered, and ye gave me meat; . . I was a stranger and ye took me in."

"Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren ye have done it unto me."

in an almshouse means a lifelong pauper, a generation of paupers, very likely generations of paupers.

(2) But still worse, the criminal instincts are easily developed in a child. The tendency with all of us is to the bad; the natural drift is with the current downward. It requires a struggle, an energetic effort to go up stream. Without the strongest kind of restraint and uplifting influences the average child will be a failure morally. How groundless then the hope that anything valuable, or even moderately respectable, can come from the child whose daily association is with all sorts of the shiftless and worthless and semi-criminals to be found in the average almshouse. A child reared in an almshouse means a wrecked manhood, as a rule, and a degenerate progeny.

THE ORPHANAGE

2. The natural step out of the almshouse was the institution, the orphanage *without the almshouse drawbacks*. A vast step in advance this, especially when the institution was founded, and is conducted by thoroughly Christian people, as they usually are. The up-to-date institution furnishes good, wholesome, moral restraint, a fairly good intellectual training, systematic and helpful physical culture, etc. But the institutional life is not the normal or natural one for the child. And the consensus of opinion by the best sociological experts is against it. While the child is guarded against a multitude of evil influences its development is abnormal, a

sort of hotbed growth. The plant reared in the hothouse lacks the strong, sturdy, hardy character of the plant grown out in the sun and exposed to

OUR FUTURE CITIZENS. THIS PROMISING GROUP RECEIVED AT THE SAME TIME

"Save the children and you save this country; save this country and you save this world."

the winds and the storms, and the sudden and sometimes severe atmospherical changes.

God did not put children into institutions, in groups, to be reared like flocks of sheep or herds of

cattle or schools of fish. He puts them in families, and usually one at a time. God places emphasis, an immense value upon each individual child, because he has a vastly important and a unique place for each one to occupy during the future ages. Just as he creates each separate world by itself, with a distinct personality, a form and design and destiny peculiarly its own in the building up of his mighty universe, so he has arranged in the family life that each child shall be a unit, a unit too that is complete in itself, having a personality of its own, and destined both here and in the future life to a career that will require self-poise and independence and strength, qualities not so likely to be developed in the institutional life. Not only does each child come alone into the world, but after its birth how speedily it succeeds in centering the life and thought and interest of the family circle upon itself. It becomes a little tyrant, a real despot, whose every want must be carefully and speedily met or there is trouble. Its very first instincts are thus a sort of prophecy of what it is destined to become in the amazing plan of God—a "king" and a "priest unto God." The family life rather than the institutional life furnishes the normal conditions for the nurture and the development of the child for its life here as well as for its life hereafter.

But we had to reach this thought by gradual approaches, one step at a time. The institution was the logical and natural escape from the almshouse, and has proved of inestimable value to a vast

number of children who would otherwise have become criminals or paupers. It has proved of value also as an object-lesson for earnest philanthropists and students of sociology and lovers of children. It has helped immensely in the study of the child problem, and if it has itself furnished the clear evidence that institutional life is not the normal life for a child, it has nevertheless earned a title to the lasting gratitude of the Christian world. It has proved a half-way house between the almshouse and the family, and the distance between these two is so great that it is questionable whether the social conscience or the Christian conscience could ever have spanned it without the help of this half-way halting-place.

THE BOARDING FAMILY

3. The third step has therefore already been reached, the family life, the natural, normal life for every child. These poor children have been deprived of this blessed boon, a real home. The parents have died or they have abandoned their children, or remorseless poverty or sheer shiftlessness has unfitted them for this sacred trust, and these children are without a home. What shall be done for them? The public conscience will no longer consent to their committal to the *almshouse*, except possibly for a few days; and the best minds and largest hearts of to-day have decided against the *institution* as a permanent home for their education and training. A real home, family life is the life these children need and the life their own natures ardently

crave. But there are obstacles in the way, grave, and some of them apparently insurmountable.

In the first place, families that perhaps are most in need of a child, and have the means in abundance for providing a good home for one, do not

"The Soul's Awakening"

A White Child Rescued from Negroes in December, 1901 — Same Child a Few Weeks Later as Adopted in a Christian Home

want it. A "gilt-edged" child they might take; the child of some respectable relative, or of a family whose social standing was on a par with their own, but they could never think of taking such children as these unfortunates from the lower classes! This

has been one of the most difficult things to overcome, especially here in the East. Misconceptions as to heredity are almost universal. Indeed, false ideas of caste seem to be natural; they are inbred. "*We* are the people," "*Our* blood is A No. 1 blood," is a conceit not confined to the "Four Hundred" by any manner of means. Aristocracy is in all our veins. The world was made and revolves chiefly for us, and those persons are simply unfortunate who are not closely related to us either by blood or marriage or business relation, or who happen not to be wealthy. Of course plenty of money usually atones for almost all kinds of bad heredities! It is exceedingly hard to get rid of the idea that the poor classes, especially the children of misfortune, belong to an inferior race, second-grade people whose birthright and inheritance is a menial life, a life of servitude.

The idea that the child from the lowest and most degraded surroundings may have fairly good blood in its veins, and at all events should be placed in a first-class Christian family, not as a servant, but given all the exalted opportunities of an own child, appears simply "awful" in the estimation of a multitude of very wise people! The agents of the Children's Home Society have even been accused of imposition when they place a child of unknown or of known bad heredities in a nice family! And the suggestion has been made that such outrageous proceedings should be stopped by statutory laws if they could not otherwise be prevented!

This caste prejudice is more prevalent in the Eastern than in the Western States, perhaps because we have studied the subject of heredity more thoroughly !

At all events, after the revolt against institutional life, there appeared no other way of getting these unfortunate children into *family homes* here in the East, *except to pay for their board.* It was found that by paying an amount equivalent to the average cost of keeping the child in the institution, one dollar and fifty cents to two dollars per week, with the cost of clothing and medical attendance added, a sufficient number of respectable families would open their doors. And because families in some instances would become so much attached to their boarders as to decide to take them as their own, and thus relieve the municipality of their further support, advocates of this boarding-out system have become very positive in their convictions that it is *the* system and answers the puzzling problem "What shall be done with the dependent children ?" more satisfactorily than any other system yet devised. This boarding-out system has grown into such favor that it has become the prevailing method in the States of Massachusetts, Rhode Island, Connecticut, Pennsylvania, and four years ago was adopted in New Jersey by legal enactment, and partially adopted in other States, in a modified form in Michigan, Wisconsin, and Minnesota.

This boarding-out system has some desirable considerations in its favor as compared with the

institutional life that it is designed to supersede. But there are objections to the system that are absolutely fatal to its claim as the ideal system. I have in hand the annual reports of the Children's Aid Society of Pennsylvania for eight years. This is one of the largest and most reputable of the older child-saving agencies in this country. During these eight years two thousand one hundred and twenty-three dependent children were under their control. Seven hundred of these were pauper children, that is children who had been committed to various almshouses in the State and by the almshouse authorities placed under the control of this Aid Society.

A careful study of these eight annual reports suggests some weaknesses in the system.

It is an *expensive* system; not expensive as compared with the two older systems, the almshouse and the orphanage. But as compared with the new plan, the ideal or God's plan, the boarding-out system is exceedingly expensive. The money consideration, however, is not the matter of most importance. *The boarding-out system fails to secure a real home for the child.* Even when most efficiently administered, as in Pennsylvania, where great wisdom has for the most part been displayed in the selection of the best available homes, followed too by a very admirable system of oversight, with rigid rules as to the child's attendance upon the day-school, the Sabbath-school, and the church, it has failed in that respect. The best boarding-house in the world, even though located in the

country with ideal surroundings, can never take the place of a real home in the thought and the heart and the life of a child.

In the first place, it is unfortunate that the appeal must be made to the mercenary side of our nature to induce the family to take a child. The pay for its board was the inducement held out and accepted. In our opinion there are only two motives in the human heart that are sufficiently strong and sufficiently God-like to insure the highest interests of a child—real parental affection, and love for God. That person who can see in the child his own flesh and blood, or learns to recognize the new-comer as such, and love it as though it were his very own; and that other person who loves God supremely and gets a clear view of God's interest in a homeless child, his great yearning for its rescue, and why he is interested, and then takes that child to his home and his heart, with an intelligent purpose to aid in accomplishing God's wish and plan—these two persons can be safely trusted[1] with the raising of a child, a young immortal. Any lower motive, especially the mercenary one, may mean neglect or disaster. For the child is regarded as a boarder. The neighbors and the neighbors' children all know that this child is simply a boarder, and a *charity* boarder at that; the chief factor in the acceptance and in the retaining of this child by the family being the pay received from the State or from a large benevolent organization. And this

[1] For an exception to the first of these persons see pp. 108, 109.

mercenary spirit naturally grows stronger. If the child remains in the family for years, it will at first be received with much affection. Its helplessness and its innocency will appeal irresistibly to the heart of those who have it in charge. But as the child grows into independence and becomes self-willed and perhaps saucy, and difficult to manage, and begins to exhibit unmistakable traits of unfortunate heredities, it will require a deeper interest than the paltry sum received for the child's board to make that family willing to grapple with the situation with a firm hand and a strong purpose.

A practical illustration of this statement was given the writer several years ago by a prominent Presbyterian pastor who had previously been a pastor in Pennsylvania, and was personally acquainted with the incident. A little boy named Tommy was taken by a family with the full intention of adopting him, but it finally concluded "as that course would cut off the money received from the county for his board, amounting to one hundred dollars a year, not to do so." The outcome was very unfortunate: "I saw Tommy last Summer and he is a specimen of humanity of which very few people would be proud. For the last few years he has been cast out to the tender mercies of mankind to make his own way."

That this is not an exceptional case becomes very apparent as we study the eight annual reports of the Children's Aid Society of Pennsylvania. During these eight years, with two thousand one

hundred and twenty-three children under its care, *only seventeen are reported as adopted.* In 1894 and 1897, four were adopted each year; in 1896 and 1898, three each year; in 1895, 1900, and 1901, one each year; and in 1899, not one was adopted. In the report for 1897, we learn that of the four adopted that year, one of them had been kept by the family *nine years* before papers of adoption were taken out, and the child was then thirteen years old. That is to say, the family put off adoption for nine years in order to secure the one hundred dollars each year for its board. And when the child reached the age of thirteen, and *they could no longer receive pay for its board* (*under the rules of the Society*), *then they took out papers of adoption.* Two of the other children were boarded for five years each, and the fourth one three years before adoption papers were called for. Here are four cases only during an entire year where love for the child *survived the onslaught of mammon.* The society during that year had eight hundred and seventy-three children under its care, and at the close of the year had four hundred and thirty for whom it was still paying board.

Of course, it was not altogether the sop of one hundred dollars a year board money that prevented all these other four hundred and thirty children, or any considerable portion of them from being adopted. In many cases, it was the "caste prejudice" already alluded to, and the fact that these were known to be "charity children" by the

TWELVE OF THESE UNFORTUNATES

neighbors and the friends of these various families. Fastidious and hypercritical people would laugh at them, or possibly sneer at the very suggestion that a "family of the social standing of Mr. and Mrs. H—— could be willing to take a 'charity' child as its own child; a child of unfortunate antecedents, as the most of them are, and who probably has hid in its blood all sorts of mischievous and dangerous tendencies." These families will not adopt these children as their own, but for the consideration of one hundred dollars per year, they will keep them in their own families just the same; in constant touch and most familiar intercourse with their own children; helping to mold the characters and distribute their poison—if there be poison in their blood—to every young and tender member of the household. *This* is all right in the estimation of these fastidious and hypercritical people. They can discover no objection to having these children in the family, provided the family does not adopt them.

But whatever may be the reason, the fact remains that the boarding-out system appears to be fatal to the dearest interest of the child in the matter of adoption. Here in Pennsylvania is a large society equipped with the best possible facilities and with large wisdom and long years of experience, having two thousand one hundred and twenty-three children pass through its hand, and at least one-half of this number boarded in the country in plain, substantial, respectable homes for a period averaging from one to ten or twelve years each, and only

seventeen out of them all have succeeded in so winning their way into the hearts of these families as to secure the blessings of a real, true home by legal adoption.[1] This is certainly not encouraging.

Something is evidently wrong somewhere. Little innocent children are wonderfully winsome. It would require a mighty counter current to success-

AS RECEIVED THROUGH THE COURT

EIGHTEEN MONTHS LATER ADOPTED AS AN ONLY CHILD IN A CHRISTIAN FAMILY

fully resist the magnet of their eloquent appeals for true love and a real home. But caste prejudice and the love of money are well-nigh irresistible; and if these do not account for the turning down and the blighting of so many of these precious

[1] The experience of the State Board of Children's Guardians in New Jersey is much the same. During the first three years, one thousand two hundred and seventy-nine children came under their control, and four hundred and twenty-three of these were still in their hands at the end of the third year—but only eight had been adopted. See Report for 1902.

lives and precious souls, then let the friends of the boarding-out system explain.

And for a brief moment let us consider what it means to a child to be deprived of this great privilege, legal adoption. Not to be adopted but treated as a public charge, the child is denied many privileges that an own child secures. The following letter from a ward of the New Jersey Children's Home Society who has been adopted is very suggestive:

> I am getting to be a very big girl, and I will be thirteen years old on May ——. Mamma is going to give me a silver watch for my birthday, and papa is going to give me a gold ring. I got an organ for Christmas. I am taking music lessons every week. I have a wheel which I got when I was twelve years old, and I like it very much. Mamma and papa are as kind to me as they can be, and I almost get everything that I want.

A child boarded out would hardly be provided with watches, rings, organs, music lessons, wheels, and a multitude of other pleasant and desirable things that love furnishes.

An adopted child has a great many other advantages over a ward of the State. He is not turned loose at fifteen years of age to look out for himself, but tenderly cared for until of age, taught a lucrative trade, perhaps is admitted into partnership with his father, and at the father's death becomes his heir. All these special privileges of a son and a multitude more that will readily occur to the reader are not enjoyed by the child boarded out, or by a ward of the State, however cared for.

We believe fully in the statement of our forefathers that "All men are created free and equal," and among other inalienable rights are "life, liberty,

DRIFTING
AS RESCUED FROM THE SLUMS

ANCHORED
AFTER FIVE MONTHS IN A CHRISTIAN FAMILY

and the pursuit of happiness." That little innocent child is not to blame because its father was unfortunate, and it ought not to be punished for life because of that fact. But if the old ideas of caste are

correct, then the institutional life or the boarding-out system is the proper method for the training of this class of children. Either system will do well enough all that is needed to be done for these children. That is, it will fit them for a life of servitude, and perhaps make them content with a second-rate station for life. At least, by years of persistent drilling, they are taught to look on resignedly and see happy children all around them receive all sorts of tender love tokens, valuable presents, special school privileges, business opportunities, an heirship to valuable estates, or other perquisites forever denied to them.

But if our contention is correct, then these old systems are awkward blunders, the rude attempts of beginners in the science of sociology. They are worse than blunders because they are dealing with young immortals; pardonable perhaps, because done in our ignorance, but nevertheless real robberies. They rob the child, they rob society, they rob God, and rob God's universe of immeasurable good that might accrue had those children secured another kind of training and environment. We show to you, therefore, a more excellent way.

IV

THE CHRISTIAN HOME

WE are prepared, then, for the fourth stage in the development of the child-saving problem, the Christian home. First, the almshouse; second, the orphanage; third, the boarding family; and fourth, the Christian home. The last two terms are used relatively. They are not intended to describe character, but motive. By the boarding family is meant the family that takes the child without a Christian motive in the taking; takes it for the pay offered for its board, or for the service it is expected to get out of the child in the form of work. In this class is a multitude of the very best Christian families, but their Christian principles and motives take second place in the reception of this child. They have been governed chiefly by pecuniary considerations, perhaps because they have not yet learned how to bring Christ prominently into their daily life and their business plans; more likely, however, because they have never stopped to consider what an immensely important matter it is, this assuming charge of a priceless soul, educating and training a future king and priest unto God.

By the term "Christian home" is simply meant

a family that takes a child for Christ's sake, takes it to help save it. This is God's plan, and therefore the highest, the ideal plan, and is plainly and fully set forth in the words already considered: "Whosoever will receive one such little child *in my name*."

And the point we desire to impress is that every child, no matter what its antecedents, has such unspeakable interests depending upon the disposition now made of it, and the circumstances that for the next few years shall surround it, that we cannot, we dare not, be careless or thoughtless. We are treading on holy ground, and should therefore "walk softly before God."

If the president's boy were actually found on the

street corner in the plight we have described, and the president, for reasons of his own, should decide to let one of us take this boy for a period of years, to be trained and fitted for some high and noble position, would he esteem it a matter of small importance whether the family had a clear sense of the responsibilities it was assuming, and some conception of the kind of care and training the boy needed to fit him in the best possible way for his future life, and that would therefore devote time and thought and heart just as far as possible to the attainment of this object? To cherish any low conceptions of the obligations assumed, or allow any mercenary considerations to hide from view the real purpose of the father in committing his beloved child to its care would at once prove such family to be unfit to be entrusted with so important a charge.

It is clearly not sufficient that the family be a Christian family, or that it take the child free of charge. An institutional life, even an almshouse might be a safer place in which to rear a boy than many a good Christian family, if the persons in charge have a clearer and higher conception of what they are undertaking. And the family best fitted to train that boy and that would do it most carefully and conscientiously might very likely accept and expect liberal pay for the services rendered. The mere fact of receiving pay for services rendered does not necessarily unfit a person for the highest and holiest service.

The conclusion reached by the best sociologists

of the present day is that, other things being equal, the Christian family is by far the best place because it is the natural place for the completest all-around development of a child; and the point we desire to impress is that this best place is not an ideal place unless the family has reached up in some degree to God's conception of the value of the child, and has also grasped in a measure God's conception of the kind of training and environment best calculated to fit that child for its high destiny.

And if the greatest care and wisdom would be exercised in the selection of a home for the training of the son of our president, how much more need of carefulness and of wisdom in the disposition we make of this ragged boy whom we have discovered to be a child of a king, and that king the "King of kings" and "Lord of lords," and whose Father has a very large place for him to occupy by and by, and has now providentially thrown him into our hands in this strange way to give us the opportunity of aiding him in the boy's rescue from the grasp of the destroyer, and to fit him in the best possible way for the priesthood and the kingdom, both here and hereafter, that he has prepared for him.

1. If God has really adopted this child as his own, and has entrusted me with its care, then a strange sacredness at once attaches to such a trust —the consciousness of an exalted mission. It is God's child; he, therefore, is a party to everything I do for that child; not an interested spectator

simply, but a vitally interested party. He owns that child, and everything I do for it or neglect to do is done for Him or against Him. He sees a jewel of incalculable value in that child. Let me therefore beware how I esteem it lightly or despise it. He has a wonderfully exalted mission, a kingdom prepared for that child from the foundation of the world, and is therefore deeply, personally interested in every word and act by which I may influence him. He not only has large things in store for this child, but as already learned, He can count up the ten thousand streams of influence *whose measure and power over others are to be determined chiefly by the thoroughness of the training that I may be able to give him*. Let me therefore tremble lest by any neglect of mine God's plans shall be

frustrated and that child miss of his kingdom, and the whole universe be forever the poorer for my carelessness and sin. Of course, this kind of careful and thorough oversight might be exercised in an institution or a boarding house. Naturally, however, it belongs rather to the privacy of the home life, and grows out of the tender and loving ties that bind parent and child together, especially in that home that has come to recognize God as its center.

2. It is God's child, and therefore an exalted honor to be permitted to receive and care for it. Instead of such a child being beneath my grade, I am exceedingly exalted by the privilege of receiving it. I have become the debtor instead of the child, because that child is no longer counted the lowly, degraded offspring of some outcast from society. We have discovered that it is a very near and dear relative of the great King, and therefore worthy of being received and held in honor by the most refined and noblest family on earth.

Suppose this child does by and by begin to exhibit bad heredities, as very likely he will, what will we do with him? If it was our president's boy, what would we do? For his boy will be found filled full of the most mischievous tendencies, and some of them very depraving, unless he differs from your boy or mine. Will we immediately return him to his father with our tale of woe? Rather will we not begin at once with energy and wisdom to wrestle with these new problems and seek to overcome them? This little waif, filled full of unfortunate

heredities, has yet been adopted by the great King. Because he can see wonderful possibilities in him he has conferred upon me the distinguished honor of helping him to secure for that little child all these possibilities. And that there may be no chance of failure in my mission, he has put that child into my keeping while very young and tender and easily molded. He has withal placed in my hands for the capture and control of that child, agencies and instruments that are absolutely irresistible, if wisely and faithfully used, his wonderful word, quick and powerful, assisted by the Holy Spirit, and by his own gracious presence in my home and in my heart. Under such circumstances, to refuse to receive the child, or to return it in disgust after it has been received because it begins to develop depraved appetites or passions, is to reveal an utter misconception of the true situation, a lack of high motive in the reception of the child, or a want of faith in God's real love and interest in it.

We do not claim that the discovery of God's relation to these outcast children can put into them what nature may in some instances have denied them. That is, it will not give them natural talent, if they do not inherit it. It will not make a dull and unpromising child bright. It will not make a homely child beautiful, or change red hair to brown, or hazel eyes to blue. It will not transform the fault-finding, or ugly, or fretful, or selfish, or sinister natures into models of innocence and sweetness. To receive a child in the name of Christ does not

mean that such a child will be made over to order, and have all its crookedness straightened out. No good thing is cheap, nor can be procured for a song. "There is no excellence without great labor."

Naturally we all shrink from hard work, especially if it involves sacrifice or suffering or large responsibility. If we could take one of these homeless ones into our family, and have only a play spell, balmy breezes and a smooth sea, or an easy down grade, we would not hesitate a moment. But when there stares us in the face the practical human side, an up-hill tug, great care and trouble, and anxiety, and patience, and time, and money, and a weight of responsibility, then we shrink back.

But this is our supreme mistake. The largest reward comes through the greatest suffering, exaltation through humiliation; the crown lies beneath the cross; the sweetest scent comes from the crushed flower; the most beautiful rose is plucked from the thorn bush; the hotter the furnace the purer the gold; crucifixion before exaltation.

But how difficult for us to realize this, one of God's greatest thoughts, and himself the grandest illustration of it. We have already learned that the saved are to occupy the very highest place. But see what it costs! A mere word of command could bring an angel into being, or create a world of beauty and people it with intelligences. But to lift a soul out of its ruin and up into childhood, oh, what an infinite sacrifice on the part of God! A mighty universe could be brought into being and

filled with beauty and divinity at a cheaper price than it costs to bring one son unto glory.

It costs us comparatively nothing to secure a servant—the payment of a little coin, a paltry pittance. But to secure a son, a child, oh, what anxious hours and days and months and years! What travail of soul and body before the child is born into the world! And then what years of care, of mingled joy and sorrow; what anxiety, what yearning of soul, what suspense, what hopes and fears! Think of the *time* bestowed in the rearing and training of one child, and the *money* spent. Oh, it costs something to secure a child!

But what is the cost of the sowing compared with the final harvest, if your child is saved? What are a few years of suffering compared with an eternity of bliss and honor and glory?

In this little treatise, we are trying to take God's side, and ask families to receive the homeless little one as their own child, not as a servant. They, perhaps, are in need of a servant, and have gone to the almshouse, or some "orphanage," or "children's aid society," and asked for a boy or girl old enough to serve them. And what have they secured? Just what they asked for; a servant, a temporary good, possibly. But their soul has not been enriched by the process, heaven has not been consulted, the future not considered; they have given nothing to God, have made no sacrifice.

We come to urge that such families make a great mistake in asking for a servant. We come to say

that there is a *jewel* in that abandoned child, a rare opportunity of securing riches and glory and honor and joy unending.

But it will cost something, some fellowship with Christ's sufferings and death ; it will cost time and

AS RECEIVED

IN HIS ADOPTED HOME A LITTLE LATER

money and patience, and wisdom and grace ; it will cost many a "heartache" ; it will cost periods of disappointment and discouragement and almost of despair. But, oh, what has been secured ? A child, a child for time and for eternity ! More, a prince of the realm, and that realm the mighty universe ! A

king and a priest unto God! What has been secured? The Master's presence in the heart and life. "For whosoever shall receive one such little child in my name, *receiveth me.*" And the Master's final benediction, "Ye have done it unto me."

3. But let us note a third consideration, the wages God offers me if I receive this little waif: "receiveth me," I get the Christ! The highest wages in the gift of the universe! He does not offer me two dollars per week board money. He does not hold out as an inducement the little service this child can render me as a servant. He simply offers me himself! And suggests that in the final accounting, he will say to me, "Inasmuch as ye did it unto one of the least of these, ye did it unto me." And he offers me a *star in my crown!*

V

THE CHILDREN'S HOME SOCIETY

LET it not be imagined that the writer, because personally interested in the Children's Home Society, is filled with the conceit that this society has discovered God's secrets or is the custodian of this ideal method in child rescue. We frankly confess that we believe this is God's plan and therefore the ideal plan, but just as frankly confess that the Children's Home Society falls far short of it in its practical, everyday experiences. The large majority of the families that receive its children are as yet evidently governed chiefly by selfish and mercenary motives, so much so that the agents of this society have to be constantly on the alert lest the best interests of the children be neglected. And this is one reason why this booklet is written and is needed—to lift the standard higher, educate the people by holding up God's ideal.

Nevertheless, the Children's Home Society has a most remarkable history, a history that very clearly stamps it as from God. It originated in Illinois twenty-two years ago with the rescue of one beautiful baby girl from an almshouse and placing it in a Christian family for adoption. It now has twenty-six separate State organizations

that are doing work in thirty different States of the Union. It has already cared for more than twenty-five thousand children and is receiving at the rate of about five thousand homeless children each year,

making it the largest child-saving agency in our country if not in the world. And these twenty-five thousand children have been placed in carefully selected Christian homes, not as boarders or as servants but as members of the household and

enjoying all the social, educational, and religious privileges granted to an own child. In fact, nearly one-half of them all have been legally adopted, while those not adopted are under the constant watchcare of the society by means of a very simple and yet very complete and efficient system, a local advisory board in every town and separate community in each State where organized, and district superintendents, from two to ten of them in each State, according to the size of the State, who give their whole time to the work, first, of investigating personally and thoroughly each family in their district who make application for a child, and then regularly visiting each child placed in their district, removing the child if a mistake is discovered in its placement or encouraging and helping with kindly advice, etc.

And while our plans and methods are yet in their formative state and a large proportion of the applications that come to us for children are still prompted by narrow and selfish and in too many cases by sordid and mercenary motives, yet with great gratitude to God we are able to point to a few genuine examples.

The following incident, picture and all, is clipped from our little paper, " Homes for the Homeless," under date of October, 1900:

> One of the most interesting items of the summer has been the apparently genuine conversion of one of our little girls, only nine years old, and who has been in the care of the society over four years, giving us an immense amount of anxiety.

We have placed her in five different families, three of these during the past year, but in every case she was returned as unmanageable. She had grown to be saucy and independent and apparently reckless of the consequences of her unruly ways. It would be impossible to give in a few words any idea of the variety and character of the problems an earnest Christian mother would find herself facing in the management of that child.

On the very day that the word came from the fifth family to come and take her away we received a letter from a consecrated Christian woman who four years ago had taken this girl's next older brother and has led him to Christ and made out of him a boy that almost any family in the State could be proud of. The substance of the letter was that, after thinking about the matter for some time, she had decided to consecrate her life to the work of leading that refractory girl to Christ.

Our eyes moistened upon reading that letter. We lost no time in getting this perplexing problem into her new home, little dreaming that the Lord would so speedily show his approval. A work that this earnest woman had figured on requiring years of patience and great heart burden has suddenly

(in about one month) been crowned with so marvelous a transformation that the child has become the joy of the whole household. Instead of a burden and a care, a "pest" to be endured for Christ's sake, she has become a blessing and a joy. How speedily, sometimes, the Lord turns our hardest crosses into our greatest treasures!

And already the Lord is using this interesting incident in encouraging other families to receive incorrigible boys and girls for the purpose of leading them to Christ. When this class of Christian families is multiplied throughout the country one of the most difficult social problems of the age will be in a fair way of settlement, the disposition to be made of the hundreds and thousands of our youth who are on the way or already in the reform school.

This was over four years ago. It may be in place to say that while this girl is still a child with all the buoyancy and life and sometimes thoughtlessness of the child nature, she is regarded as a genuine Christian, a thoroughly transformed child, with a promising future if the foster mother, in her poverty, can give the child the training and schooling necessary to secure best results.

The following is clipped from a recent number of "The Children's Friend," the organ of the Children's Home Society of South Dakota:

Some years ago a lady with children of her own came to the home after one of our little ones and her heart went out toward a little blind child. After she was in her home for a time she took her East for treatment. This she did three times, and at last had the gratification of seeing her restored to sight, so that she is able now to attend the public school. This, of course, was a heavy expense, but she did it for Christ's sake, who said, "Inasmuch as ye did it unto one of

the least of these ye did it unto me." But that is not all. The foster parents now write for adoption papers so that the child may have equal property rights with their other children. And yet blatant demagogues will say that putting children in such homes is farming them out to make serfs of them. In this connection we want you to read the following letter from a foster parent addressed to Brother Slingerland, our Iowa superintendent, and published in the organ of his society, the "Children's Home Herald":

DEAR SIR: Thinking it might be of interest to the society and the public in general to know that all children taken into adoptive homes are not disappointing (as the mercenary and unthinking would have us believe), we write to tell you of our experience now after seven years with one of the little souls that was adrift on the vast sea of humanity.

He came to us after you had placed him three times in other homes. He was six years old, small and delicate, with a well-developed case of chronic catarrh. Well, we sized him up and said, "We will raise him to maturity and then he will die of tuberculosis." Not much encouragement from a money-making standpoint, and we were only in ordinary circumstances. But humanity said, "Here is a little soul dependent in every sense of the word," and if there ever was a case of humanity that blended into real religion this was one of them, and, as we had experienced and observed only theoretical religion, we had a curiosity to tackle the real thing.

We took the boy, placed him on a bread and milk diet (not skim milk), and allowed him whatever else he wanted provided it was digestible, but he seemed to desire more than anything else bread and milk. This agreed with him and he grew. We dressed him in flannels winter and summer and still do now. After seven years we have practically cured his catarrh and he still uses a milk diet to a great extent. No patent on this recipe. Milk diet, patience, and time are the ingredients. So much for the physical.

The child being delicate, we did not start him to school until he was seven years old. He showed in the beginning a desire for tools. When he was given a nickel he bought nails and by degrees we bought him tools as he demanded them. This is his recreation. Of course he skates in the winter time and goes swimming in the summer time, like other boys. He goes to school, likes the school, reads the daily paper, the

"Scientific American" (which is bought for him exclusively), the "Youth's Companion" (which is for all children), and books from the public library.

He can tell you the relative strength of the world's navies, he knows their ships by name, he knows the special mechanism of the latest built gunboats, has wrecked old sewing machines and clocks, knows how they run and why they run, knows a stationary steam engine and can name its parts; understands steam, its force, and how it is made; knows the chemical analysis of water, air, and several gases, and is studying the elementary chemistry. These, of course, are not school studies; they are studies on the side. They were left in his way. If he had an appetite for them the affinity would assert itself. He would read trash novels too, but he and his mother discuss them, and they have already left a bad taste in his mouth. He does not find that class of literature at home. He is very musical, has tune and time well developed, and has an unusually sweet voice. He is now thirteen years of age, is strong and healthy, and if he lives he will be a graduate of Armour's School of Technology.

To say we are privately and silently enjoying or receiving our reward does not express it. We put our money in a "prospect hole" of humanity and are so far getting diamonds

Yours truly, A FOSTER PARENT.

This is, of course, an exceptional case, and yet who can tell how many diamonds of exquisite beauty and inestimable value may be lying around in the slums or at the bottom of the great sea of humanity only awaiting some skillful diver to bring them to the surface and an artist who knows how to cleanse and polish them into beauty and glory?

And may we suggest still further that, while every child thus received will not develop such special talent and so speedily prove a diamond from the "prospect hole," yet if the reasonings of this treatise are correct you have only to wait a little longer and be gifted a little with the vision of

God to see more than diamonds in every child taken out of the "deeps" of sin and depravity and transformed into a child of God and an heir of glory.

We will venture for the sake of the lesson to give another incident not quite so promising as the foregoing.

A boy of fourteen years had been in the care of the New Jersey Children's Home Society for a year and a half, and been replaced again and again until we were discouraged and had decided that the reform school at Jamesburg was the only alternative. He was bad in so many ways that we had almost reached the conclusion that he was beyond the reach of the grace of God, at least so far as our weak faith and our facilities as a society were concerned. All the workers of our society, including the matron of our Receiving Home and the force in the central office, had come to agree with the different families that had him on trial, that the reform school was the only place. The superin-

tendent alone hesitated. It occurred to him that the boy had *never yet had a first-class chance to become a Christian.* As his surroundings had all been unfortunate before he came under the care of the society, and the families that had since been intrusted with his care had asked for a boy old enough to be of service ; and while they were all good Christian families, it was apparent that the thought uppermost in their minds was the service he could render them ; and because he was not used to work, nor very reliable, had certain bad habits, and was otherwise more trouble and expense than he was worth, they returned him to the society. *Not one of them made a special effort to lead the poor boy to Christ, and not one of them had thought of sacrificing their work or their financial interests in order to reform and save him.*

So before consenting to place the boy in the reform school, the superintendent went up into the northern section of the State and spent a Sabbath with a consecrated farmer who had already led one wild boy to the Master's feet. The family had no use for the extra boy, at least for the winter ; but after a full statement of the case they decided to receive him, and did, *just to help save him.*

The boy began to improve right away. In three weeks the report was "the boy is all right"; later, "doing finely"; two months later, "improving every day." The superintendent from the very first felt a confidence that the boy would be rescued and would develop into a valuable manhood. The

reader can therefore imagine his sore disappointment when, after six months of improvement the boy took it into his head to run away, and succeeded in covering up his tracks so completely that we have never learned his whereabouts. A great many earnest prayers have been offered for that boy and some good seed was sown that may yet take root and bear fruit in the years to come, though for the present we are disappointed.

This is an ideal case in theory, and though its practical results have not yet developed, we have given it because it presents so clearly the central thought of this treatise, receiving an outcast, unpromising child in the name of Christ. We could give instances far more promising, for though our experience in child rescue is as yet quite brief, the cases are increasing. In fact, we are persuaded that this ideal conception is slowly but surely getting into the thought of a constantly increasing number of Christian families who ask for children. The facility with which the Children's Home Society in the different States finds free homes for all classes and all ages of children, without offering board money or other mercenary inducements, is simply marvelous, considering the conditions, especially here in the East. It cannot be satisfactorily accounted for by the fact that there is a large number of families without children, many of them longing for a child to love; for this fact has existed all along in the past. Years before the Children's Home Society came into existence there

were empty hearts, thousands of them, longing for a child to love, and there were hundreds and thousands of children thrust into almshouses, or left without care to drift into the reform school or into the criminal ranks; or if earnest Christian hearts were moved to place these children in Christian orphanages, they had to be kept there until old enough to be of service before these empty-hearted and desolate family homes were willing to receive them. What was the matter? The answer has already been given; it was the *bugbear of heredity*, or the *caste prejudice*. These children from the almshouse and from the slums *were not counted as the grade of children to be received into intelligent and refined family circles as an own child*. It is the discovery of God's relation to such a child, his deep interest in it and its exceeding worth in his estimation that is rapidly changing the whole aspect of the child-saving problem. It is lifting the ban that has so long prohibited such unfortunate children from the social privileges of the average child, undermining the caste prejudice, and pulling down every wall of separation. Now, not only homeless children, but real outcasts, children filled with unfortunate heredities, are taken by parties who a few years ago would not have entertained the thought for any consideration. God's view of the child is gradually gaining a foothold, not through the agency of the Children's Home Society alone or chiefly, but a thousand things have conspired together to bring about this triumph of the truth.

God himself is coming to the front, and this is one of the many evidences of his stately steppings.

At the annual conference of the National Children's Home Society recently held in St. Louis, Rev. Dr. Hastings H. Hart, the superintendent of the Children's Home Society in Illinois, and the recognized leader of this form of child-rescue in our country, stated in a public address that the whole history of child-rescue for the past fifty years and more reveals God's hand with unmistakable distinctness — a constant evolution, a gradual progression from the lowest ideals to the highest. Especially from the day over fifty years ago when Mr. Brace, now of sainted memory, became possessed with the

idea that family life instead of institutional life was God's plan for every child, and through great opposition and bitter criticism at first, began to ship in carload lots the homeless children rescued from the slums in New York City out to the Western States to be placed there in family homes, without much thought at the beginning as to the character of the family that received the child, only so that it was a family, the work and the ideals have been gradually developing up to the present hour. One man or one society or institution has developed one thought, another man or institution another thought, until we have apparently reached the perfect ideal so far as methods and machinery are concerned. Our great need now is not an improvement of methods or increase of machinery, but the breath of God imparting spiritual life and spiritual vision and motive, so that Christian families in need of a child can take God's view and be controlled by his high and holy motives. And we fondly believe this is coming. Our God is marching on. His views are bound to come to the front and completely triumph sooner or later. And even now God has evidently undertaken to encourage and to honor any and every child-saving agency that will raise a high standard. Our experience has been uniformly this: That the more careful and exacting we have become in insisting upon thoroughly Christian homes and Christian motives in the reception of the child, the more God opens homes and hearts for the children we have to place.

Of course, we are all human, and God does not ask nor expect us to throttle our natural appetites and cravings. He gave John the Baptist to the old couple who had never had a child, and because they recognized that boy as God-given and as having a very high and glorious mission, and because they had a keen sense of grave responsibilities in the training of that boy for his high mission ; yet that did not interfere in any way, or lessen their natural love for their boy, rather they loved him the more. The higher his mission and the more completely he belonged to God and to the entire nation, the prouder they must have been of him, and the more careful in their training for his high and holy mission.

So people may be expected to ask for children because they want a child to love. A large vacant place in their hearts is demanding an object of affection ; and while that demand is natural and God-given, this treatise is insisting that there is a still higher conception ; that this child they ask for is of high birth, and if led to Christ may become a "greater than John the Baptist"; in fact, is related to God, and therefore to the throne of the universe. And so while they can gratify in the completest possible way their natural instincts and cravings for a child to love, they can at the same time have that natural love intensified and increased a hundred-fold by the knowledge of the high birth and the grand future God has planned for that child, *if* they can at all rise to the situation and faithfully perform their duty in its training.

We may also expect people to keep on asking for children from mercenary motives, or because they need a child to help them about their work. This too is natural. They have the work; it has to be done; and it is not wrong to want a child to help to do it. Nor is it a wrong to the child to be placed where it will be obliged to work and work hard. Hard work and plenty of it is often the salvation of a child. "The devil finds some mischief still for *idle hands* to do." Far more children are spoiled by idleness than by hard work. It is no valid objection therefore to an applicant for a child that he needs the child's help. We are simply trying to lodge in these good people's heart and thought a far higher conception—that here is a golden opportunity to "kill two birds with one stone"; that while they are securing some needed assistance in their farm work or in their household duties, they at the same time have the high honor of "entertaining unawares" more than "an angel," and the unspeakable privilege of pleasing God, and accomplishing an untold good for posterity and for God's whole universe.

And one happy thing about it is, that the more prominently this higher object is kept to the front in the training and the treatment of this child, the larger returns will be secured in the lower realm. That is to say, the boy that is led to the Lord Jesus Christ as the first and most important move, and then taught the highest conception of obligations to God and to those around him and to the eternal

world, is the boy who will do the best work and become the most satisfactory helper in every way.

Jesus himself was trained in his boyhood by parents who had some conception of his exalted mission here on earth. And their training of him was so successful that at twelve years of age he was certainly a prodigy of wisdom and understanding for a boy of his age. But this special training did not interfere at all with his learning the carpenter's trade, and finally becoming, as we are told, after the death of his reputed father, the support and comfort of his mother and his younger brothers and sisters.

JESUS IN THE TEMPLE

So, because a Christian farmer needs a boy to assist him about his farmwork, this need not stand in the way of his rising to the sublime conception of God's ideal, and receiving that boy as a sacred trust from the Master, and during all his stay on the farm counting him as a younger brother of the great

King, destined to sit with the King upon his throne of universal empire, and therefore making it his supreme care and highest privilege to so educate and train that boy as to fit him for his future high vocation.

The large majority of our business men, and the men who stand at the head both in the Church and in the State, were raised on farms. Country life, all things considered, is probably the safest and the best in which to rear lawyers and preachers and judges and senators and presidents. And so we can see no reason why a farm shall not prove to be the very best place here on earth to train "kings" and "priests" who, during the future ages, are to occupy the most prominent places in the government and control of God's mighty universe.

But if a farmer comes to us for a boy, with evidently only the one mercenary thought of help on his farm—no matter how good a Christian he may be, or how high a place he may occupy in the church and in the community—we are becoming more and more reluctant to trust a boy in his hands. For we have had this vision of God, and feel sure he has entrusted this boy to our care to help secure for him his birthright and his crown; and we do not feel authorized to place him even in the very best of homes, unless we have some assurance that these higher interests of the child will be carefully guarded.

In saying this, however, for the Children's Home Society and its methods, I confess I can see no special reason why every other method of child-rescue

may not be lifted up to the same high plane and seek only or chiefly the highest interests of the child—and especially the institutions, the orphanages that are usually controlled by thoroughly Christian people and are not hampered by State control. Why may not and why should not every Christian organization whose business it is to care for homeless and dependent children, fall into line with this new order of things, and so recognize God's interest in a needy child and God's willingness to aid in providing the best thing for it, that it can rise above the "caste prejudice" and the "servant problem," and say to every selfish and mercenary applicant for a child, "Hands off! This child is altogether too important a personage and has altogether too valuable a future to be entrusted to unholy hands"? From past experience, we feel sure that no orphanage or other institution would be obliged to keep children until old enough to be of service; for, as a rule, the families that receive a child for Christ's sake are inclined to take it earlier in life, if possible, so as to be sure of a larger outcome and better results.

The mercenary applicant says: "We want a child not less than twelve years old; if still older, so much the better."

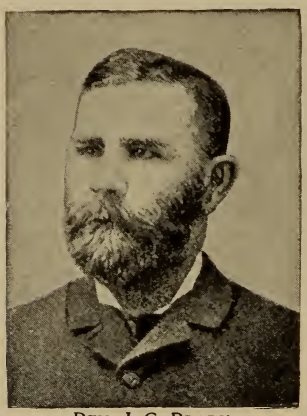
The applicant with this higher motive predominant would say: "The older the child is, the more firmly its evil habits are rooted, and therefore the more difficult and uncertain the problem of its salvation; and if saved, its mental and moral, and

possibly physical life are so far wrecked by sinful associations and indulgences that we could never hope to build up so beautiful and complete and useful a life and character as if the child were younger."

The one applicant has as a central thought the amount of *work* the child will be able to do; the other applicant, the amount and quality of the *character* he may be able to put into the child.

A WOMAN'S MIRACLE

John Green Brady, the governor of Alaska, has never known the name of his father or mother. Years ago, when he was a street gamin in New York City, selling newspapers and blacking shoes, he was just "Brady." So the other street arabs called him.



REV. J. G. BRADY
GOVERNOR OF ALASKA

One day with a carload of other waifs he was shipped out West. Judge Green, of Indiana, saw the carload of boys and told his wife about the invoice of youngsters. She thought they ought to take one. "Very well," said the judge, "I'll pick out the toughest specimen of the lot."

He selected "Brady."

Now, in the homely phraseology of Indiana, "You can't never tell what may become of a lousy calf." Mrs. Green got hold of the boy's heart. Her refining influence soon had its effect on the young barbarian. He saw the world would give him a chance. Ambition spoke to him.

He clung to the name of "Brady" and left all his old life behind him. Henceforth he was John Green Brady.

To make a long story short, the boy went through the grades and high school at the head of his class. Partly by his own efforts and aided partly by Judge Green, he went through Yale college. Then he was sent as a missionary to Sitka, Alaska. He became the best-loved man in that country, and was appointed governor.

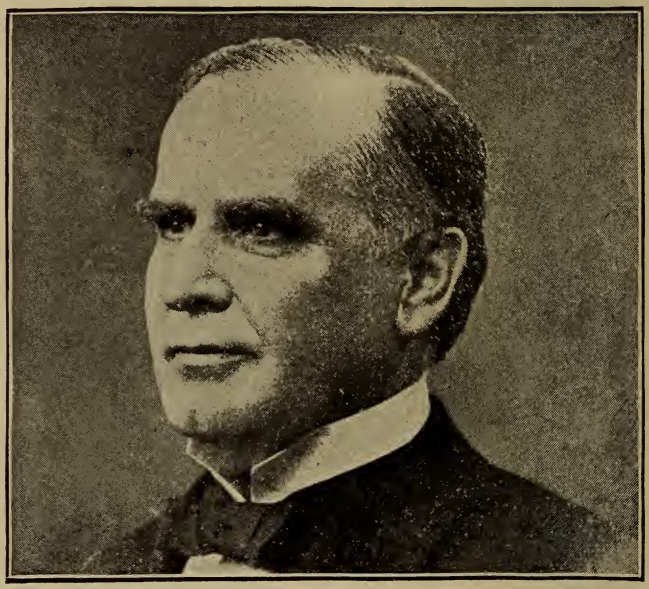
FROM THE "FIVE POINTS"

One Sabbath morning, in the First M. E. Church, of St. Paul, Minn., after an address by the Rev. E. P. Savage, superintendent of the Minnesota Children's Home Society, the pastor of the church stated to his people that when a little boy of five years of age he was brought from the slums of New York City with a carload of other boys and "dumped out on the prairies of Minnesota." He was now the brilliant and much-loved pastor of one of the largest churches in the Northwest. When he had finished his statement, a fine-looking, well dressed, gentlemanly appearing stranger in the rear of the congregation arose and asked the privilege of making his statement. "I too," he said, "like this pastor, when a little boy, was brought from the Five Points in New York City out to the prairies of the West." He was at that time governor of North Dakota, a man of noble character of brilliant mind, and loved and honored by all who knew him

EX-GOVERNOR BURKE
NORTH DAKOTA

We insert these two pictures side by side because, as Providence would have it, these two men, when little abandoned

waifs from New York City, were brought West on the same car, and *occupied the same car seat together*, about forty years ago. They were brought to Noblesville, Indiana, and there placed in separate families to be trained for grandly successful lives—the one through a business career and the law into a governor's chair in North Dakota, and the other through a Presbyterian pulpit and a missionary to the same high position in Alaska.



President McKinley helped to organize the "Ohio Children's Home Society" in 1893. He was elected its first president and retained the office until his death. He was deeply and personally interested in its humane work, contributing freely both time and money.

VI

THE GREAT OBJECTION

BUT you are thinking, if you do not say it, "Oh, if I could only know that the results will be as you say, that the child would certainly be saved! I would be willing—I know I would—to make almost any sacrifice of time or means or patience. But who can tell what the outcome will be? Is it not a dangerous experiment to take a child whose antecedents are unknown, or are known to be bad, possibly very bad? May it not prove the taking of an adder to my bosom? It is true God loves that child with an infinite love; but so has he loved every child that has afterward gone to the bad. A multitude of the best Christian parents have failed in leading their own children to Christ, with all their inherited good qualities in their favor. What, assurance then, can I have that this child can be certainly saved, with all its inherited tendencies against such a consummation?"

This is an honest question that demands an equally honest and earnest answer. A complete answer, however, would require a careful inquiry into the perplexing problems of heredity, much too large a subject, and quite outside the scope of this little book.

A few brief suggestions must suffice :

1. You who take an outcast child for Christ's sake, that is, for the express purpose of rescuing it, have greatly the advantage of the " multitude of the

best Christian parents " who have failed to lead their own children to Christ. These " best Christian parents " have sadly failed at two vital points. They did not " take " their child for Christ's sake. It came to them unsought, very likely undesired. The Lord Jesus was not consulted or his

aid invoked in the introduction of that little life into its earthly condition. You, on the contrary, have taken this outcast child for the express purpose of leading it to Christ and securing for it a home with him and with yourself in glory.

As Jesus was not consulted or honored in the introduction of those children into their home life, so we fear it is true he has not been consulted, or his word carefully followed and honored in the after-rearing and training of those children. God's word is exceedingly plain and explicit as to how Christian parents should train their children. There is no possibility of misunderstanding its plain and positive requirements. But these explicit instructions have been largely ignored by these Christian families. The probabilities are that they have never so much as read their Bibles once through for the express purpose of finding out how to train up their children so as to lead them to Christ and fit them for heaven.

In the education and training of their children, they have probably followed the customs of society around them and left the Bible out of the account. They do, of course, take their children with them to church and send them to Sabbath-school regularly ; and perhaps once a year, or once in two or three years, under the excitement of some special evangelistic services, they have exhibited a deep personal interest in the salvation of their children. But all the rest of the year worldly matters have had the right of way, exclusively so, possibly,

except two hours on the Sabbath. The result is the Bible is practically an unknown book to those children, except the brief and scattered lessons secured at the Sunday-school ; and the idea that the kingdom of God and his righteousness should be a first consideration and the all-important business of life has never been drilled into their thought and life by anything they can see in the life and the aspirations of their parents.

You, on the contrary, having first taken this outcast child for the express purpose of leading him to Christ and fitting him for heaven, will have that purpose constantly before you, and will therefore be looking out for ways and means to accomplish that purpose ; and if you are wise, will be constantly and prayerfully consulting your Bible for pointers ; and thus securing wisdom from above, you will be able to "train up your child in the way he should go."

At these two vital points these "best Christian parents" have sadly failed, and therefore furnish reasons enough why their children have not thus far become Christians. We have called these two failures "vital points." We do not mean that those parents have so badly sinned that they can never hope for the salvation of their children. Those children are not at fault for their parents' neglect. And God is so deeply anxious for their salvation, that he stands ready and waiting and anxious for the parents to *remove the obstacles that have so far prevented him from stretching out his arm for their*

rescue. Whenever those parents will humble themselves before God and repent in dust and ashes for their past neglect of their children, and begin so far as possible to "repair damages," and enter into solemn covenant with God that hereafter they will faithfully perform their duty toward their children, as God's word may point it out to them, God is gracious and ready to forgive, and will remove their sins as far from them as the east is from the west, and *save their children.*

But up to the present time you have immensely the advantage of those "best Christian parents," so far as effectually reaching your child with gospel influences is concerned, in that you first received him in the name of Christ, and since receiving him, your great aim has been to secure his salvation.

2. Our second suggestion is that there may not be so much difference as you imagine between the hereditary endowments of your abandoned child and the children of these "best Christian parents." We cannot enter into this discussion, though exceedingly interesting and a wonderful "eye opener." We will briefly suggest:

That those "best Christian parents," even if they were much better than they are, did not and cannot transmit to their children their regenerated

Christian natures. They can only transmit the "old Adam," not the new creation in Christ Jesus. And the "old Adam" in them may be about as depraved and sensual and devilish as the "old Adam" in the parents of this abandoned child you have received.

One of the noblest, sweetest-tempered and most thoroughly consecrated ministers of the gospel in the State of New Jersey has a son who is a thoroughly bad boy, a real reprobate; and the good man, when asked how it was possible for such an earnest Christian man to be the father of such a son, replied, "Before I was converted I was as bad as they make them. Was called 'the young devil,' and counted the worst boy and young man in the neighborhood. My boy does not inherit his father's renewed, regenerated nature, but the 'old Adam.'"

But if the inherited tendencies of your child are much more degraded and sensual, he may not be on that account harder to reach and subdue by the grace of God than are these other more favored children. That is to say, if your boy has a natural tendency to lie or steal or be foul-mouthed or saucy, or exhibit other indications of the slum life or the depraved environments of his parents, these other children will probably inherit more of pride and vanity and self-conceit; very likely also, more stubbornness of will, and more of the grasping, hoarding propensity called in the Bible "covetousness." And these hereditary tendencies are really more difficult to reach and restrain than the lower tendencies in your boy simply because they are

more respectable in the public eye. The devil can more easily persuade the children of respectable and refined Christian parents that they are good enough already. So that, all in all, this poor outcast boy that you have received in the name of Christ may be no harder to reach and subdue by the grace of God because of his degenerate birthright. But even if he were harder to reach, as we estimate difficulties, it is encouraging to know that there is nothing hard for God.

While our Lord Jesus was here in the flesh, it did not seem to make any difference to him whether the person in need of healing was just beginning to lose his eyesight, or whether his eyeballs were wholly destroyed and their sockets empty ; whether the patient was sick with a little fever or in the last stages of the loathsome leprosy ; whether possessed of one or a legion of devils—the same omnipotent word easily prevailed. And whether the needy came to Jesus in his own behalf or was brought to him by anxious friends, the results were always the same. So it is not a question of the amount or degree or character of the degraded and sensual tendencies with which your child was born, but a question of the amount and character of your faith in the mighty Deliverer—whether it is an intelligent faith inspired and directed by the conditions plainly set forth in the word of God. In other words, *your success in the rescue of your child depends upon your relations with the Lord Jesus Christ and his word, and not upon the character of the child's heredities.*

3. A third suggestion is that it is the word of God lodged in the heart of the child by the Holy Spirit that leads to his conversion and salvation. There seem to be two steps in this process: first, the child needs to get acquainted with himself, with his own need, that is, with the situation, the real facts regarding his life and conduct, his relation to God; and then second, he needs to become acquainted with the Lord Jesus Christ as his Saviour and friend and helper. And the word of God is the Spirit's chosen instrument for accomplishing these two ends.

The following is the substance of an article that has twice appeared in our little quarterly, the organ of the New Jersey Children's Home Society, and is placed here for the sake of the lesson so plainly set forth:

TRY THE BIBLE ON HIM

We are often asked by anxious foster parents, "What can we do with our boy? He will tell such awful stories. We can't place any dependence whatever upon anything he says. He will make a lie right up out of 'whole cloth,' and face us down in it, and stick to it."

This is the one almost universal sin with the larger boys, and the girls too, that come under our care. Stealing, or petty thieving, comes next in its frequency; then, perhaps, swearing; and the anxious foster parents, after talking, reasoning,

pleading, and perhaps scolding the unfortunate child until tired and discouraged, finally sit down and write to the superintendent as above.

This is a very perplexing problem, and we have often been at our wit's ends to frame an answer that would be of any practical value whatever to the anxious ones who write us.

The difficulty, of course, lies in the fact that the moral nature of such child has been neglected and remains undeveloped, and the ordinary methods of educating the moral sense and awakening the conscience along these special lines have been overlooked.

Evidently, in the plan of God, his word is the irresistible agent for arousing the conscience and quickening the moral sense. It is represented as the "sword of the Spirit," sharper than any two-edged sword, "quick and powerful" "piercing, even to the dividing asunder of the soul and the spirit; a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart." It is called a "hammer," able to break in pieces the flinty heart. Jesus says, "It is the spirit that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing. The words that I speak unto you, they are spirit and they are life." "The flesh profiteth nothing." Our words fall lifeless and powerless, our appeals and reasonings and pious talks profit nothing; Jesus' words only are "spirit and life." They take hold with irresistible power. They get down into the depths of our nature, and take hold of hidden forces that are not reached by our platitudes and eloquent appeals. God himself calls our words "chaff," as compared with his, and asks, "What is the chaff to the wheat?" In Isa. 55 : 11 he says, "My word . . . shall not return to me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it."

We would suggest, therefore, that instead of talking so much to the boy about the folly and the sin of lying or stealing or swearing or whatever his special fault may be, and appealing to his pride or his ambition or his manhood, that you simply, but earnestly, "try the Bible on him."

Hunt up the passages, a large number of them, all through

L. of C.

the Bible, on the subject of lying, for instance, and read them to him, or have him read them carefully over. Perhaps require him to commit some of them to memory, explaining the hard words, if there are such in the passage, and so *put the boy face to face with God.*

The following passages are suggested as specimens:

Lying forbidden: Lev. 19 : 11; Prov. 24 : 28; Eph. 4 : 25; Col. 3 : 9.

Hateful to God: Prov. 6 : 16–19; 12 : 22.

Threatened with punishment: Ps. 5 : 6; 52 : 1–6; 55 : 23; Prov. 12 : 19; 19 : 5, 9; Rev. 21 : 8, 27.

Abominable: Ps. 101 : 7; 119 : 163; 120 : 2; Prov. 13 : 5; 19 : 22.

Characteristic of a fool: Ps. 58 : 3; Prov. 10 : 18; 14 : 5, 25; Isa. 30 : 9.

Comes from the devil: John 8 : 44; Acts 5 : 1–10.

When the boy finds out that it is God himself speaking directly to him he will feel very differently about the message than when you are speaking upon your own authority or experience to him.

And precisely the same process for arousing the conscience and quickening the moral sense, if instead of lying the bad habit in your child should be swearing or petty thieving or some other habit that is offensive to God and ruinous to the soul.

But possibly there are no specially bad habits in your child to fight against and eradicate. The chief difficulty may be simply carelessness, neglect, a gay and giddy, self-seeking, pleasure-loving life, thoughtlessness as to spiritual interests, a lack of appreciation of the wonderful personal love of the Lord Jesus Christ. But this attitude of carelessness about God's claims and the claims of our own spiritual natures is more offensive to God than

either of the above bad habits. To forget God is an awful crime and is so presented in the Bible. And still a greater crime is unbelief or a refusal to open the door and let Jesus come in. If Jesus is standing at the door and knocking for admittance to your child's heart and life, that child ought to know it and know it thoroughly. He ought to be made to understand how mean and selfish and depraved a condition of heart that could allow the best and noblest and most loving friend in all the universe to come to his door and knock for admittance and be refused!

But let all these views of truth, this presentation of the child's needs, his great sins, and the wonderful love of God as exhibited in Christ Jesus come to him through the words of Scripture. Let it be always understood that it is God who is speaking, not the parent or the preacher or the Sunday-school teacher. Because God's words are so different from our words, as already suggested, God's word proves to be a sharp sword with two edges, it not only arouses the conscience and quickens the moral sense when backed up by the Holy Spirit, it does vastly more. It gets down into the heart and begins a new life there; hence is called "seed," living seed (see 1 Peter 1 : 23; Luke 8 : 11, etc.).

And do we readily take in the full meaning of this statement, that God's word is living seed? If you and I were skillful we might manufacture a kernel of corn that would appear to be an exact copy of one of God's kernels. If we were very

skillful we might make it so exact a copy that the most skillful chemist could not detect any difference. But plant our production in the best possible soil and under the best possible conditions and it would not grow. Why? Simply because there is no *life germ* in our kernel. God puts a life germ in every kernel he makes, such that when planted under appropriate conditions it grows and develops a new life. We cannot do that. Omnipotence and omniscience alone can put a life germ in a kernel of corn.

So God's words are strangely different from our words. He seems to have put life germs in them, life germs of such character that when planted in the heart of a child under appropriate conditions they will grow there and develop a new life, the life of God in the human soul.

But the devil is wary. He understands the character of God's word, its irresistible and transforming power, and so is on the alert, and as soon as the seed is sown he catches it away if possible; hence the help of the Holy Spirit is needed to do two things for that child:

Help him to understand clearly the meaning of the message he reads;

To prevent the devil from catching it away until it has had time to make its impression and get firmly rooted as seed.

Do not, therefore, content yourself with simply requiring your child to commit God's word to memory, and then leave it to the Holy Spirit to use

his own words as a sharp two-edged sword or as living seed. The Holy Spirit expects us to co-operate with him and work with him just as far as we possibly can. Hence it is your privilege as a parent to sit down with your child and carefully go over with him each one of these passages from God's word. Do it very earnestly and thoroughly, pray over each separate passage, pleading with the Holy Spirit in your child's presence to make the meaning of this passage very plain to him, to "show them" to him. This will impress upon the child the great sacredness and the importance of God's words and thus aid the Holy Spirit in fixing them in the memory and getting them down into the heart as living seed.

The point we are anxious to emphasize is the great importance, the absolute necessity of using God's word with your child instead of your words, God's thoughts instead of your thoughts. One of the most common mistakes of Christian parents is that they talk with their children, talk very earnestly perhaps and plead with them very tenderly, and pray for them as earnestly and tenderly, but forget to furnish any material to work upon. It is as if a farmer should plow his ground and harrow it thoroughly and put it in the best possible condition to raise a crop, and then pray God to give him a good harvest, *but forget to sow any seed!*

This is what we do so often. God's word is the living seed. There is no possible genuine conversion apart from God's word. The Holy Spirit

must have his sharp, two-edged sword if he would reach the conscience. He must have his living seed if he would begin a new life in the soul, and it is our province to furnish him that sword and to sow the seed. It is his province to get down into the conscience and make that sword cut; to find his way into the heart and see that the seed sown is lodged there until it germinates and develops a new life.

And the beauty of it is that the Holy Spirit can always be relied upon to do his part faithfully and successfully, if we do our part faithfully and thoroughly and ask his help with persevering earnestness.

Permit us to urge still further that you do not delegate this important duty and privilege to some one else, to the Sunday-school teacher or even to the pastor. Of course, you will gladly accept their assistance, but in reaching your child you have immensely the advantage of anybody else, for your child believes in you and loves you and you love your child as no other person can, and love is irresistible. You can get closer to your child and be more persistent and intent than any other person can.

A remarkably suggestive scene is that recorded in 2 Kings 4 : 34–36, the restoration of the dead boy to life. The prophet went alone into the room where the dead child lay, and after shutting the door and praying, "He went up and lay upon the child, and put his mouth upon his mouth, and his eyes upon his eyes, and his hands upon his hands: and he stretched himself upon the child, and the flesh of the child waxed warm."

And this process was repeated until "the child opened his

eyes" and life was restored. Whether a designed type or not, there is in this strange scene a beautiful suggestion of God's method of bringing dead souls to life, by having a live soul, one full of the Christ life, come into such close and persistent contact with a dead soul, as that the warmth and heat of the one shall become contagious, and by and by impart itself to the other. Or to express it in another way, this man whom I wish to reach and save has ears, but he does not hear God's warnings or his gracious promises, and so I put my ears into his ears' place; I hear for him. He has eyes, but they do not see the dangers that beset him, or the glorious things that are offered him; but I see these things clearly, and so I become eyes to him. He has a mouth, but it has never been opened in prayer to God, and so I talk to God in his behalf, as he ought to talk for himself. His heart is cold and dead, and so I put my heart in his heart's place and attempt to feel for him the burden of soul and the agony of interest that he ought to feel for himself.

And thus I put my soul in that soul's place so closely, so persistently, that he cannot help but catch my fire and become warm from my heat.[1]

And the point we make is that there is no person on earth who can do this for a child quite as effectively and persistently as the parent, because of the natural relations that exist between them.

As you value your child's soul, therefore, do not delegate this unspeakable privilege to anybody else.

If you have neglected this duty to your child altogether in the past you will very likely shrink from it now. A consciousness of neglect and of guilt before God will arise. And the more you think about it and pray over it the greater and darker that guilt will appear. You have loved your child

[1] "Every Creature," pp. 46, 47.

all these years and yet have committed the great crime of overlooking and persistently ignoring its highest interests. You have yourself found a friend

THE ADOPTED GIRL AHEAD

Said a vulgar little girl, who was sneering at another,
In accents that were very far from mild,
'You ain't got no father, you ain't got no mother—
You ain't nothin' but a horrid 'dopted child!"

"I'm quite as good as you," came the answer from the other,
"I was carefully selected from a lot!
But only look at you—your father and your mother
Had to keep you if they wanted to or not." —*Selected*

in the Lord Jesus Christ, better to you, more precious, more valuable and desirable in every way than all other friends together, and yet you

have never introduced that dearest friend to your child. On the contrary, the adversary of souls, the devil himself, has gotten possession of your child and is gradually leading him to ruin, and the child is blindfolded and therefore quite unconscious of the situation, but you can see. You understand the situation and yet have remained silent all these months and years past.

All this consciousness of personal neglect of your child's highest interests will naturally lead you to shrink from the duty and obligation now, and you will be tempted to appeal to the child's Sunday-school teacher or to the pastor or some other person to perform this service for you. But the very fact of past neglect is the reason why you may not and must not shirk. Your own attitude toward your child in the past has very likely been the main reason why God has not been able as yet to save him, and if so, then you are the main obstacle in the way of your child's salvation, and you cannot shirk with safety to the child; besides, *the richest blessing to your own soul lies right under this cross. Try it and see.*

CHAPTER VII

SOME PRACTICAL LESSONS

1. Advantages of God's Plan

(1) All other methods may or may not have regard to the best interests of the child. They are liable to have most prominent the interests of the other party. God's plan has the future of the child always to the front.

(2) All other methods are liable to overlook God's relation to the child and his interest in it. But this plan never. In it God is exalted and his claims recognized.

(3) Applicants for a child, under control of any of these lower motives, may be unfitted to have the care of the child. A few days before last Christmas one of the largest daily papers in Philadelphia gave quite a unique notice of the work of the New Jersey Children's Home Society by advertising the fact that the said society had babies to give away as "Christmas presents." The result was a great flood of applicants, good, bad, and indifferent—for nearly all people love children. However, scarcely one in ten of these applicants measured

up to our requirements. We have constantly to refuse applicants who possess one very important recommendation—*they love children dearly*.

On the other hand, we have never yet had reason to refuse an application from a person or family able to reach so high a standard as to receive a child for Christ's sake, or for the sake of the child's future. Such families will necessarily be intelligent people, people who have clear views of God's interest in that child, and of the child's future. They will be thoroughly consecrated people who can rise above personal and selfish interest and worldly considerations, and therefore can always be counted upon as first-class applicants. No second-rate family can reach so exalted a position.

(4) This plan secures God's presence and aid in the training and care of the child, and therefore the best reasons for expecting success and happy results. All other plans have no such promise or assurance, and therefore frequently are most unpleasant failures.

(5) This plan therefore secures not only the best interests of the child, but the best interests of the family, its spiritual uplift, a consecrated Christian life, clearer views of God and unseen realities. At the same time, as already shown, it insures best financial returns from the child taken.

(6) It insures a better child in every way. The family's treatment of the child will have more of tenderness and love, as well as more of wisdom and firmness. This will react upon the child in

returned affection, in more respect and reverence. The child will become a more thoroughly reliable and helpful child, and therefore more a comfort and satisfaction to the family.

(7) This plan is the only one that lays up treasure

FOUR BROTHERS, OF GOOD PARENTAGE, MADE HOMELESS BY THE DEATH OF THEIR MOTHER

in heaven. The child is taken chiefly for the sake of its future, and during the countless ages of eternity, the family will be reaping a harvest of joy and happiness, and of gratitude to God that he permitted them while here to aid him in securing one more king and priest for his universal empire.

2. Two Practical Conclusions

(1) All the considerations and appeals and lessons in this treatise are quite as applicable to *own* parents as to *foster* parents; and if carefully read and pondered ought to greatly intensify parental love, and lead to larger plans and more intense anxiety to capture their children for God, and make of them all that it is possible to make.

It is exceedingly sad to contemplate the seeming carelessness of so many Christian parents as to the moral and spiritual environments of their children. Treading on holy ground—and every step almost leaving a mark upon the character and life of their children that all the after years and ages cannot erase—and yet how thoughtlessly and how carelessly that step is taken!

It does seem to this writer that if a Christian parent could once get a clear view of the real situation—that the child committed to his care furnishes the grandest mission and the highest and the most sacred and the largest that can be committed to any intelligent being in God's universe—such a view would at once give an inspiration and furnish a motive that would control the whole life in the interests of that child's future.

And what a sacredness would it give to motherhood and to fatherhood! A clear conception of God's thought and God's interest in a child will revolutionize not only our methods of child training but our views of child bearing, and would speedily transform this wicked, ruined world into a garden of God.

(2) Second practical conclusion. If the considerations and arguments in this little treatise are correct, what grander work possible to the church of Christ to-day than a systematic, thorough, and persistent effort to reach every child in the community with the gospel?

The Sunday-school as an institution is a noble effort in this direction—the bringing of Bible instruction within reach of all the children. But it does not quite meet the demands; in the very nature of the case it cannot.

As to the children of Christian parents, the Sunday-school does not reach God's ideal. One hour a week out of one hundred waking hours is not quite God's plan for the capture and control of our children in the interests of their spiritual nature. It gives the devil too long a rope to have the inside track with the child ninety-nine hours out of every one hundred. God's plan seems quite fully set forth in Deut. 6 : 6–9 :

> And these words, which I command thee this day, shall be in thine heart:
>
> And thou shalt teach them *diligently* unto thy children, and *shalt talk of them when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up.*
>
> And thou shalt bind them for a sign upon thine hand, and they shall be as frontlets between thine eyes.
>
> And thou shalt write them upon the posts of thy house, and on thy gates.

That would certainly give God the first chance with the child, give him instead of the devil the inside track during the ninety-nine waking hours. And this obligation of the parent cannot, of course, be cancelled by sending the child to Sunday-school one hour on the Sabbath day.

It does not and cannot reach all the children. Less than one-half of the children of school age in our country attend Sunday-school, and these are in the main children of Christian parents. The children most in need of religious instruction do not go to Sunday-school because their ungodly parents will not consent. If these are reached at all, it must be by individual, hand to hand and heart to heart work. We have to "go out into the highways and hedges and compel them to come in." And in the light of the discussions in the preceding pages, if such inconceivable value attaches to each one of the children in my neighborhood, does it not lay upon me and upon every Christian in the neighborhood an obligation that we cannot very well evade, to bring all these children so far as possible under saving influences ?

And we will venture to suggest that the Children's Home Society, where thoroughly organized, is already quite well equipped for such an undertaking. We have or are supposed to have a local board, as we term it, a branch of the State organization, in each town or separate community in the state. This local board is made up of a few of the best, most earnest Christian people in the

community who love children. Their business is to report to the State superintendent every case of a child as soon as it comes to need, to look up and report as to the character and standing of every family in their community that applies for a child, and when a child is placed in such family to keep careful watch and report to headquarters, when desired, how the child is getting along, how treated, whether sent to day school, to Sunday-school, etc.

As now constituted, this local board waits until the devil has accomplished all his work of wreck and ruin in a certain household, broken up the family, thrown the children out upon the street; then it reports the sad facts to the superintendent: "Five bright children are without a home and need the society's care." And the society steps in to gather up the broken fragments and do the very best it can with these outcast children. It finds large-hearted strangers willing to take them in and provide them with good Christian homes.

Now, suppose this wideawake and consecrated local board could discover the situation in that unfortunate family *before* the crisis came, and trip the devil in the very midst of his nefarious scheme and save the household from wreck? Possibly get hold of the mother and lead her to Christ, or even the father? It might require a large amount of earnest, persistent, personal effort and a mighty struggle in wrestling prayer. But that kind of exercise would put new life and strength and power into that local board, give it plenty of thoroughly Christian work

to do, a work that would be quite in keeping with the spirit of our mission as a society—to get neglected children into Christian homes. It would be a work of *prevention;* and "an ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure."

In this way thousands of homes where sin reigns and where tens of thousands of innocent children are fast going to destruction might be changed into Christian homes, and the parents patiently and lovingly helped to train all these children for Christ and for heaven. There would really be no limit to the possibilities of such a work, for it could be extended until it took in every unconverted family in every community in our land.

And while such evangelizing agency is, of course, outside of the scope and intent of the Children's Home Society as at present constituted, there is certainly nothing in its constitution or in its principles to prevent its local boards from undertaking such a work, if they were willing.

But the Children's Home Society is as yet only organized in a portion of the States, twenty-six all told with four others as auxiliary, and in these thirty States there are a great many communities where no local boards exist; whereas the work we have suggested appeals not to any special organization of Christian people; it appeals to all organizations, to the church universal, and to every individual Christian who loves Christ and loves souls and wants to do the largest possible work in the redemption of this lost world.

Let a mothers' club be organized in every community, whose special object shall be to reach every unconverted mother and lead her to Christ, and then aid her by wise counsel and by earnest and persistent prayer in training her children in the way they should go. Let the young people's societies, the Christian Endeavorers, the Epworth Leaguers, the Baptist Young People's Unions, the Andrew and Philip organizations, etc., undertake the work of reaching every child in their respective communities old enough to be led to Christ, perhaps secure the names of such children and divide them up among the workers, each Christian worker becoming responsible for three or five or possibly ten such children, according to the circumstances and the time at his or her disposal. And then having received such charge, let each worker first of all "size it up," that is, carefully and prayerfully study the problems he has undertaken to solve, the unspeakable value of each one of these young immortals committed to his care, God's interest in each one of them, his willingness to aid in any earnest effort to reach them, the instrumentalities he has provided, the place of the word, the place of

the Holy Spirit, the place of individual personal effort, and especially the place of effectual, fervent prayer. Then go about the task with confidence and hope, conferring frequently with the mothers' club, asking the pastor's advice, presenting his burdens now and then at the weekly prayer meeting, and persist in this kind of effort until the end is secured and the children reached.[1]

The parents *may* be rescued with immense and persistent effort; the children *can* be reached and with far less effort. This is therefore the grandest, most important work of the present century. And how else shall the world ever be reached? If the children are led to Christ and filled with Bible truth, it would mean the ushering in of the millennium, the beginning of the end in the redemption of this lost world.

[1] For a somewhat extended presentation of the methods and value of personal, individual work read a little book just published, "Success in Soul-Winning." The Winona Publishing Company, Chicago, Ill. Price, in paper, 25 cents. For sale by American Baptist Publication Society.

APPENDIX

NOTES ON THE ILLUSTRATIONS

Page 12. Abandoned by mother. Received when three months old and placed the same day in a Christian home—nine years ago.

Page 23. A Christian mother dies, leaving four bright little boys in the care of the father who does his very best to keep his family together. But obliged to be absent all day at his work, the boys, without the mother's constant care, easily drift into the street, and after a year's experience the father decides that the best thing for his boys is to place them in Christian families through our agency. The youngest of these four brothers is the little boy at the right in this group of three.

The little boy at the left, the brightest and most promising of the three, was abandoned by his mother when a little babe, the name "Freddie" being the only asset left him by either parent, whose very name and place and character are unknown.

Page 25. Of respectable parentage on both sides. Mother died, father unable to care for him.

Page 30. Born when the political pot was boiling the very hottest during the first race between Mr. McKinley and Mr. Bryan. As the baby had no legal father and was abandoned by his mother, and had possible presidential timber in him, he was named after both the candidates so as to be sure to bear the name of a president.

Page 53. The most of us take a deal of stock in our knowledge of human nature. We would be greatly pleased to see our readers pick out from this group of twelve the children of bad heredities or unfortunate antecedents. The results would probably be amusing at least, if not an "eye-opener," and very likely upset many of our theories of heredity.

The whole twelve have an unusual development of the moral organs, as the phrenologists locate them—that is, the central and highest group, the middle top of the head. Not one of them looks very dangerous! And yet they are all illegitimate.[1]

Page 60. Abandoned by father, mother dead, released by grandmother. Now developing into a beautiful and valuable young womanhood.

Page 63. Once homeless; now the center and joy of an earnest Christian home.

Page 71. Released by mother. Now contented and happy in a foster-mother's love.

Page 81. Abandoned by a drunken father. Released by a mother in poor health. Been now nearly six years in a pleasant country home.

Page 92. Over nine years ago the superintendent received an earnest letter from a local board in South Jersey, stating that a mother had just lost a baby boy at birth. She had lost two others before in the same way and was now almost overwhelmed with grief. "Can you possibly furnish us with a baby boy for her?" The superintendent was obliged to reply that we had no baby boy in hand. The very next day, however, he visited a prominent town in the northern part of the State, and as he alighted from the train the first man he met was the pastor of the First Presbyterian Church, and the very first words he uttered were these: "Say, Brother Lamb, can you find a home for a little baby boy just born here, and whose mother died a few hours after its birth?'

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[1] Possibly some of our readers have not considered the fact that the majority of the mothers of illegitimate children are young girls of good character and of good parentage, who have been betrayed under promise of marriage or by over-confidence and love, and have spent nine months of the bitterest repentance for their sin. Their whole moral nature has thus been thoroughly aroused, and so far as it is possible for mothers to do so, have stamped an awakened moral sense upon their offspring which reveals itself in an unusual development of the moral organs, as noted above.

Of course, if the mother is a loose character and conscienceless, these results will not appear. But only a very small proportion of the illegitimate children who come under our care have lewd or characterless mothers, probably not more than one in ten.

It took but a few days to bring these two strange providences together; and the reception of that baby boy by that broken-hearted mother is among the memories that can never be forgotten. Perhaps two years afterward the Lord kindly permitted that mother to give birth to a healthy child of her own which appears at the left of the sturdy boy now adopted and installed as the elder brother in that home.

Page 95. Abandoned by mother; now adopted in a happy Christian home.

Page 98. Once homeless; now a centre of sunshine and joy.

Page 108. A family had lost the only child, a daughter three years old. The mother was unable to be comforted, and at the end of the year was gradually sinking into a physical decline. Her physician and her husband urged her to accept a substitute. This beautiful child, not quite two years old, filled the vacant place so completely that they were ready to adopt her a week after her reception.

Page 116. This boy came to us through a Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children. He is doing nicely in an earnest Christian home.

The above taken together will give a very good idea of the character and quality of the work now being done in thirty different States by the Children's Home Society.

M. T. L.

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